

SLIGO County Council

Annual Report 2008



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FOREWORD

Introduction by Cathaoirleach



Councillor Jude Devins
Cathaoirleach

2008 was another busy and productive year for Sligo County Council, and we worked hard to deliver a range of important services to the people of County Sligo. During my term as Cathaoirleach I had the privilege of meeting many local groups and associations, and I was heartened by the excellent work being delivered on the ground throughout the county. Many of our local communities have been transformed by committed local volunteers, who inspire and energise the wider community with their endeavour and enterprise. Sligo County Council works best when it works in partnership with the local communities, and I see this model as a major factor in addressing the many challenges that lie ahead.

Community spirit and endeavour was also very much in evidence in the planning and delivery of a number of important facilities. Over the last five years Sligo County Council has overseen the investment of €110 million in our waste water capital programme, including the provision of a €5 million waste water treatment plant in Enniscrone. Providing this infrastructure is hugely significant in terms of attracting sustainable investment to these communities, and great credit is due to the various project teams for the excellent standards they applied in terms of designing and constructing these facilities. The successful delivery of these projects shows the expertise and ambition of this Authority, and is evidence of our capacity to provide major projects on time and within budget.

Another special highlight of 2008 was Sligo's hosting of a stage of the World Rally Championships. In terms of supporters and television audience, this was the largest sporting event hosted in Sligo, and I welcomed the opportunity to showcase our beautiful county to a world audience.

At a personal level, I took great pride in the fact the inaugural Cathaoirleach's Ball raised in the region of €20,000 for a cause very close to my heart, St Jude's Children's Home in Gulu, Uganda, and this achievement is a fitting testament to the kindness and generosity of the people of County Sligo.

Councillor Jude Devins
Cathaoirleach

FOREWORD

Introduction by County Manager



Hubert Kearns
Sligo County Manager

Sligo County Council had another challenging and productive year in 2008, with a range of major projects planned and delivered across all the major service areas. Our ongoing objective is to deliver a quality, customer-focused service, and at a strategic level to capitalise on Sligo's designation as a 'Gateway' under the National Spatial Strategy. This Strategy is aimed at accelerating the development of gateway cities, and will be the core determinant of economic prosperity in the country. From a local and regional perspective, it is important that we continue to work in partnership with other agencies to attract sustainable investment and jobs to the Sligo area.

This partnership approach can be the catalyst for the continued development and growth of our county and will enable us to provide key infrastructure and high quality cultural and recreational facilities. Local communities have been greatly energised in recent years, and in many instances our role has evolved to being in effect facilitators to work alongside ambitious and committed local organisations and agencies.

One of our main responsibilities as a Local Authority is to plan and deliver high quality transport and service infrastructure to meet future demands of the commercial and private sector. The changing economic environment presents formidable challenges to all Local Authorities, and there is an onus on all of us to apply scarce resources prudently.

County Sligo is known and regarded world-wide for its rich cultural and literary tradition, and in this context I expect the development of cultural facilities to be a critical factor in boosting Sligo's reputation as a cultural and tourism destination.

Hubert Kearns
County Manager

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Sligo/Drumcliffe Area Elected Members



Cllr. Veronica Cawley
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Management Team



Mr. Hubert Kearns
County Manager



Mr. Tom Kilfeather
Director of Services,
Infrastructure Services



Ms. Rita McNulty
Director of Services,
Community & Enterprise,
Arts & Environment



Ms. Dorothy Clarke
Director of Services,
Housing, Social, Cultural
& Corporate Affairs



Mr. Declan Breen
Director of Services,
Planning, Sligo Borough
Council, Sligo Harbour,
Enforcement & Heritage



Ms. Marie Leydon
Head of Finance



Mr. Bartley Gavin
Acting Director of Services,
Cranmore Regeneration
Project

STRATEGIC POLICY

Committee Members

SPC 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING POLICY

- Cllr. Tony Mc Loughlin (Chairperson), Beechlawn, Barnasraghy, Sligo
- Cllr. Patsy Barry, Rinroe, Grange, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Aidan Colleary, Cully, Curry, Charlestown PO, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Jude Devins, 34 Clara Court, Strandhill Road, Sligo
- Cllr. Deirdre Healy Mc Gowan, Breeogue, Knocknahur, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Seamus Kilgannon, 81 Rathedmond, Sligo
- Cllr. Sean Mac Manus, 5 Mountain View, Maugheraboy, Sligo
- Mr. Michael Keenan, Keenan Construction Ltd., Carraroe, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Gerry Healy, Kevinsfort Ltd., 1 O'Connell St., Sligo
- Ms. Niamh O'Driscoll, Union Wood Road, Ballisodare, Co. Sligo
- Ms. Phil Tuohy, Kincullen, Aclare, Co. Sligo

SPC2: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

- Cllr. Jimmy Mc Garry (Chairperson), Twin Oaks, Oakfield, Sligo
- Cllr. Mary Barrett, Ardabrone, Dromard, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Paul Conmy, Meenaun, Culleens, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Michael Fleming, Carrowreagh Cooper, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Albert Higgins, Carrowroe, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Rosaleen O'Grady, 1 The Orchard, Kevinsfort, Sligo
- Cllr. Gerard Mullaney, Highwood, Kilmactranny, Boyle, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Gearoid O'Connor, Cambs, Ballymote, Co. Sligo
- Ms. Sally Ward, Cregg, Rosses Point, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Martin Enright, Raheen, Kilmacowen, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Brendan Queenan, Castletown, Easkey, Co. Sligo

SPC3: TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURAL POLICY

- Cllr. John Sherlock (Chairperson), Knox Park, Ballisodare, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Ita Fox, Colgagh, Calry, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Margaret Gormley, Carrowloughlin, Bunninadden, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Jerry Lundy, Rhue, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Gerry Murray, Calterane, Gurteen, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Pat Mc Grath, Ardnaglass, Ballymote, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Pdraig Davey, The Cottage, Ballure, Clogherevagh, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Gerry Queenan, Cabra, Rathlee, Co. Sligo
- Ms. Rita Ann Burke, Skreen, Co. Sligo

SPC4: HOUSING POLICY, SOCIAL & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Cllr. Joe Queenan (Chairperson), Lacknaslieva, Enniscrone, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Martin Baker, 2 Ardkeerin, Riverstown, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Veronica Cawley, St. Martin, Rathbraughan, Sligo
- Cllr. Imelda Henry, Riverside, Sligo
- Cllr. Joe Leonard, Cloonaghbawn, Ballinfull, Co. Sligo
- Cllr. Chris Mac Manus, 5 Mountain View, Maugheraboy, Sligo
- Cllr. Declan Bree, 1 High Street, Sligo
- Mr. Frankie Brannigan, C/o Courthouse, Teeling Street, Sligo
- Ms. Sharon Boles, Altvelid, Ballintogher, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Conor Fitzgerald, Atlanta Place, Cluin Dara, Gurteen, Co. Sligo
- Mr. Gerry Creamer, The Blennicks, Rosses Point, Co. Sligo

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE



**HOUSING, CORPORATE
& EMERGENCY SERVICES
DIRECTORATE**

Housing & Building

The Housing Section of Sligo County Council provides a number of very important services, covering every aspect of social housing:

- Assisting people who are in need of housing and who cannot afford it from their own resources.
- Provision and management of traveller accommodation.
- Liaison with approved Voluntary Housing Organisations and other agencies in the provision of accommodation.
- Encouragement of home ownership through the Shared Ownership Scheme, Tenant Purchase Scheme, Affordable Housing Scheme and various Loan options.

Here are some of the specific Housing Services that Sligo County Council provide.

- Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, Housing Aid for Older People and Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme,
- provision of social housing under traditional design and build, Part V acquisitions and open market acquisitions.
- extensions to existing local authority houses,
- improvement works to privately owned houses in lieu of local authority housing,
- loans for house purchase and improvement,
- mortgage allowance scheme for tenants surrendering local authority or rental subsidy accommodation and purchasing or building a house for their own occupation,
- maintenance, and management of local authority housing and traveller accommodation,
- Rental Accommodation Scheme,
- "Tenant Purchase" sale of local authority houses to tenants,"
- "Shared ownership" a dwelling house bought between the local authority and the tenant, the tenant pays a mortgage on a percentage and rents the remaining part from the local authority
- support for the provision of social housing projects by voluntary housing bodies under the Capital Assistance and Rental Subsidy schemes,
- provision of affordable housing under traditional design and build and Part V
- delivery of accommodation services for homeless people,
- inspection and enforcement of private rented accommodation

HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

The Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan 2004-2008, as agreed with the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government in December 2004, sets targets for the Council to deliver a specified number of units per year across a range of housing options such as Social, Affordable, Voluntary and Part V Housing. This figure stands at 493 over the life time of the plan which averages at an estimate of 98 units per annum. This figure sets a challenge to the Council in terms of securing and procuring adequate land and negotiating with both developers and the Voluntary housing agencies.

The Housing Capital Allocation from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for 2008 was €11,300,000, which was made up as follows:

- Local Authority Housing Programme €10,250,000
- Remedial Works Schemes €1,400,000

The following schemes were completed in 2008:

COMPLETED IN 2008	
Geevagh	6
Tubbercurry	20
Cuffadda	6
Camross, Ballymote	4
TOTAL:	36

The Council has always had a policy of purchasing houses on the open market where the houses represent value for money and where a demand exists. However, in the current economic climate, it is not possible to source many houses on the open market which fall within the Department of the Environment and Local Government's approved unit cost budget. However, 13 houses were purchased on the open market in 2008. In addition, work commenced on 4 rural houses during the year.



Connolly Park, Tubbercurry – Completed in 2008

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Housing & Building

PART V

In recent years where house ownership has become more difficult for households to achieve due to the increasing price of housing, Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, has proved an invaluable source of affordable housing providing Sligo County Council with assistance in delivering the Housing Capital Programme.

The Housing Strategy states that 20% of eligible sites, which are the subject of new residential development, are to be set aside for the development of social and affordable housing.

During 2008, a substantial number of properties became available for Social Housing in the following developments:

9 no. Dorrins Strand, Strandhill (social)
6 no Hawthorns, Carrowroe (social)

Construction was at an advanced stage in other sites such as Aylesbury Park and Ard Laighne Coolaney.

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The Sligo Local Authorities have recently put in place a Procurement and Project Management Team. The aim of the team is to assist in the procurement of services and projects on behalf of the Sligo Local Authorities and to oversee the project management of specific capital works in both Sligo County and City.

The team is currently involved in Housing PPP projects in Carney and Bellanode. The Carney Housing scheme is being piloted in the County as a PPP (Public Private Partnership) project and will see the development of 5.3 acres of County Council owned land into a mix of social, affordable and private housing together with some possible small scale commercial development and community facilities.

HOUSING MAINTENANCE AND ESTATE IMPROVEMENTS

Since the beginning of the Planned Maintenance Programme in 2002, much progress has been made in the general upkeep of Council housing stock. Works typically include replacement of worn out doors, windows, fascias and soffits. The emergency repair funds are used to carry out repairs to housing stock other than those repairs listed in planned maintenance and deemed eligible in accordance with the Tenant Hand Book. The Council spent a sum of €510,000 under planned maintenance and emergency repairs in 2008.

The Council allocated a sum of €50,000 in 2008 towards Environmental Improvements works.

RENTS

Rents payable on Local Authority dwellings are assessed under a Differential Rents Scheme. A Differential Rents Scheme means that the rent is based on the income of the household with deductions in respect of any dependent children in the house. During the year, rents were reviewed to bring them into line with trends in the economic climate.

HOUSING LOANS

People who wish to purchase or build a house but cannot get a loan from a building society, bank, etc. may be eligible for a loan from a local authority. The maximum house purchase/construction loan is 95% of the cost to a maximum of €185,000.

SHARED OWNERSHIP SCHEME

This scheme offers home ownership in a number of steps to those who cannot afford full ownership in one step in the traditional way. The applicant will initially acquire a share of between 40% and 75% of the house and rents the remaining percentage from Local Authority with the intention of purchasing the remaining equity from the Council within a 25 year period. Late 2008 saw an upsurge in interest in this scheme due to the squeezing of credit with private lenders.

HOME CHOICE LOANS

Home Choice Loans is a mortgage provided through a number of local authorities for First Time buyers who cannot get sufficient finance from a bank or building society.

Home Choice Loan will provide up to 92% of the market value of the house purchased.

The maximum loan amount will be €285,000. The loan is a normal Capital and Interest bearing mortgage which is repaid on a monthly basis.

The mortgage term will be for a maximum of 30 years and will only be available for newly built homes.

This is only the introduction stage of this new loan scheme.

TENANT PURCHASE

Persons who have been tenants of a local authority house for a period of at least one year may apply to purchase their rented house outright or by means of Shared Ownership under the Tenant Purchase Scheme. The purchase price will be the market value of the house in its existing state of repair and condition, less various discounts. The applicant wishing to purchase their home should seek a mortgage from a financial institution. In 2008, 6 tenants purchased their houses from Sligo County Council under the Tenant Purchase Scheme.

IMPROVEMENT WORKS IN LIEU OF RE-HOUSING

This Scheme allows Sligo County Council to improve or extend privately owned houses, occupied or intended to be occupied, by an approved applicant for housing as an alternative to the provision of Local Authority Housing. Sligo County Council pays the full cost of the works and the applicant then makes repayment on the amount. These repayments are calculated in a similar manner to the Differential Rent Scheme and apply for a period of 15 years.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

4 no dwelling at Ard Laighne, Coolaney, were sold in the traditional fashion i.e. Sligo County Council initially acquired the completed properties from the developer and subsequently sold these properties on to suitably qualified applicants.

9 no. units at Dorrins Strand, Strandhill were dealt with through the new mechanism of "Direct Sales" whereby the approved applicant purchases the property directly from the developer:

Construction is at an advanced stage at sites known as Carbury Cove, Sea Road, Aylesbury Park.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Housing & Building

ESTATE MANAGEMENT

The role of Estate Management Officer involves providing continued support to Council tenants via pre-tenancy training, facilitating the setting up of Resident Associations and assisting them with the preparation and implementation of Estate Action Plans. The Estate Management Officer also provided a communication link with Council officials regarding housing issues that tenants may have, e.g. maintenance, transfers, etc. and provide a valuable service to both tenants and Council by being a constant presence on estates to deal with any estate management issues that may arise on the ground.

ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT

Sligo County Council introduced an Estate Enhancement Scheme for local authority housing estates in the County in 2007 and was successful in securing partial funding of €155,000, over the lifetime of the Scheme, from the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government under the Sustainable Communities Fund. Designed as an annual programme, the Scheme will provide investment for 15 estates over a period of three years 2007-2009.

The objectives of the Scheme are as follows:

- To promote an enhanced quality of life within the associated local authority housing estates.
- To improve the environment of the estate.
- To improve the aesthetics of local authority housing estates.
- To maximise the potential of green areas within the estates.

The Council spent a sum of €100,000 on Environmental Enhancement works in 2008 to local authority estates under a programme running from 2007 to 2009. Works were carried out at:

- Kiernan Avenue, Collooney
- Pine Grove, Grange.
- Woodlawns Enniscrone,
- Atlantic View Strandhill,
- Gormley Villas, Bunninadden,
- Orchard Grove, Carney,
- Cloonshanbally Culfadda
- Riverstown
- Bruach Na hAbhainn Coolaney
- Courthouse Drive, Grange
- Castle Heights, Easkey

Typical works undertaken as part of the scheme include landscaping, painting, provision of garden furniture, rehabilitation and cleaning up of green areas. In 2008, there was also provision made for extra car parking spaces at Atlantic View in Strandhill.

Outcomes:

- The investment in the estates will have a positive impact on the visual appearance and physical environment of the estate and create an aesthetically pleasant and desirable residential environment.
- The capital investment in the estates will act as a catalyst to those in the community to continue to maintain and improve their estates.
- In many communities local infrastructure works have provided the impetus, and have been the forerunners to, a wider range of local

development activities and projects. In this regard, community infrastructural works are the catalyst both to an improved local physical fabric and wider local socio-economic development.

NEW GRANTS SCHEMES

Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme for People with a Disability

The Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme for People with a Disability is available to assist in the carrying out of works which are reasonably considered necessary for the purpose of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability who has an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment. The type of works allowable under the scheme include the provision of:

- Access ramps,
- Downstairs toilet facilities
- Stair lifts
- Accessible showers
- Adaptations to facilitate wheelchair access
- Extensions
- Any other works which are reasonably considered necessary for the purpose of rendering a house more suitable for the accommodation of a person with a disability.

The level of grant aid available is determined on the basis of gross household income and can be between 30% - 95% of the approved cost of the works.

Mobility Aids Housing Grant Scheme

The Mobility Aids Housing Grant is available to cover a basic suite of works to address mobility problems, primarily, but not exclusively, associated with ageing. The works aided under the scheme include:

- Grab Rails
- Access Ramps
- Level Access Showers
- Stairs-lifts
- Other minor works deemed necessary to facilitate the mobility needs of a member of a household.

The effective maximum grant is €6,000 or 100% of the cost of the works, whichever is the lesser. The grant is available to households whose gross annual household income does not exceed €30,000.

Scheme of Housing Aid for Older People

The Scheme of Housing Aid for Older People is available to assist older people living in poor housing conditions to have necessary structural repairs or improvements. The type of works grant aided under the scheme include:

- Structural repairs or improvements
- Re-wiring
- Repairs to/replacement of windows and doors
- Provision of heating, water and sanitary services
- Dry lining

The level of grant aid available is determined on the basis of gross household income and can be between 30% - 100% of the approval cost of the works.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Housing & Building

VOLUNTARY HOUSING

Voluntary Housing is provided by non-profit independent organisations that provide rented houses for people who cannot afford to buy their own houses or specific groups such as the elderly, homeless, people with special needs or disabilities. A recipient of a Voluntary house must be registered on Sligo County Council's housing list, however, while the tenant enjoys all the rights of a County Council tenant they are unable to avail of a tenant purchase on this house.

TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

Sligo County Council carried out an assessment of Traveller Accommodation Needs that was completed in September 2008. This Assessment looked at the needs of families resident in Sligo County who are seeking accommodation in various forms, e.g. group housing, standard local authority housing, traveller halting sites etc. This assessment, and updates done through 2008, will form the basis of a new Traveller Accommodation Programme to be prepared in 2009.

Sligo Local Authorities' Housing Sections are leading the Accommodation sub-group of the Inter-agency network and are working closely with its partners from Sligo Traveller Support Group, Sligo Leader Partnership Company and the HSE on agreed actions to improve the accommodation conditions of the Traveller community in Sligo.

ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING NEEDS

Local Authorities are required under Section 9 of the Housing Act 1988 to undertake an assessment of need for local authority housing accommodation every three years and this was required to be completed by 31st March 2008. Up to date information was obtained on each applicant's housing situation, household composition and income in order for the assessment to be completed. The results of the needs assessment provides Sligo County Council with an up-to-date position on need and will enable this Authority to plan future investment programmes.

The Assessment of Need for Housing 2008 was carried out as follows:

On 4th January 2008 all applicants on the housing list were sent a letter indicating that the 2008 assessment was being carried out and the following documentation needed to be completed and returned to the housing office.

- Additional information application form
- Certificate of income
- Interview declaration
- Affidavit re separation

A number of reminder letters were sent to all applicants who failed to return details. However some applicants, when contacted, wished their name to be removed from the housing list as they had bought a house or had moved out of the county. Any applicant who failed to reply by the end of March 2008 was removed from the housing list.

Once all information was returned each file was looked at in detail and each applicant was categorised based on inspections and interviews which had been carried out by members of staff.

However when the information was returned to the Housing Office it showed an increase in the number of households in need of social housing support and a significant variation between the different categories of need. There showed a substantial increase in the category for the special needs (older people and people with a disability) households.

The results of the Assessment of Housing Needs will shape the funding of Sligo County Council in the future and the housing solutions provided by Local Government. A number of new initiatives will also be introduced during the lifetime of the assessment to best provide for the accommodation needs of the people of Sligo.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Communications Office

The Communications Office provides information services to the elected members, staff, media and the general public, as well as providing administrative support to the Cathaoirleach.

E-CONTACT

The Communications Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter. 'eContact' is circulated to individuals and groups who register their interest on-line. A "hard copy" of the e-newsletter is also available to those without access to a computer.

TEXT ALERT SYSTEM

On 6 November 2008, Sligo Local Authorities formally launched a "Text Alert" facility to enable people to report traffic management problems around the streets of Sligo. The text messages are relayed via the Communications Office to the Authorities' Traffic Wardens who respond immediately to the scene of the alert.



Mayor Cllr Veronica Cawley with members of People With Disabilities Ireland, staff of Sligo Borough & County Council and elected members at the launch of the 'Text Alert' system.

Initially piloted with People With Disabilities in Ireland (PWDI), the system has now been extended to the wider community, and any member of the public can now report traffic management problems, such as illegally parked vehicles or other obstructions on the town's footpaths, for immediate attention. This facility is considered a "first" for local authorities in Ireland in terms of traffic management and will enable our Traffic Wardens to respond instantly to the public's concerns on traffic issues.

RADIO PROGRAMME AND PODCAST

In 2007, Sligo Local Authorities launched a podcast facility for their websites which allows people access a broadcast of news and information on-line and facilitates the provision of news to a listening audience.

The first anniversary of the initiative saw the podcast reach a much wider audience, as local radio station Ocean FM have included it as a scheduled programme on a monthly basis. Called 'Council Focus', the programme is broadcast on the second Sunday of every month and a Wednesday evening repeat.

It is hoped that this initiative will greatly increase Sligo Local Authorities ability to convey important information to people who are reliant on this medium. The programme will continue to be available as a podcast on the Sligo Local Authorities websites.

WEBSITES

The Communications Office works with the Information Technology section to maintain and update the Sligo local authorities' websites. The sites provide on-line access to application forms and guidelines, contact details for all the services, weekly roads report, monthly news digest, and all the current advertisements and recruitment notices. The sites have been upgraded to ensure they are accessible to people with visual impairment and people with co-ordination difficulties, and a newly introduced contact management system means the site can facilitate presentation of the information in other languages.

OPEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

During 2008 the Communications Office hosted a series of visits in conjunction with the 'North West Parents & Friends' and the 'Our Voice Advocacy Group' under Sligo Local Authorities' 'Open Local Government' Programme. Five groups from the Rosses Sheltered Workshop, Cregg House and the National Learning Network completed the 'Open Local Government' course and members of the groups were presented with certificates by the Cathaoirleach.



Members of the National Learning Network receive their certificates, upon completion of the Open Local Government Programme, from Cathaoirleach Cllr Jude Devins.

The course is tailored to meet the particular requirements of the group concerned, and can be adapted to image/photo based or text based presentation. The aim of the programme is to create a greater awareness of the Local Authorities' role in the community, to respond to specific queries raised, and to encourage interaction and engagement between the people delivering the course and the course participants.

**HOUSING, CORPORATE
& EMERGENCY SERVICES
DIRECTORATE**

Communications Office

CATHAOIRLEACH'S AWARDS

The Cathaoirleach's Awards Scheme was introduced in 2000 to reward the many volunteers in County Sligo who have given special service to their community. The award winners in 2008 were:

Arts:	Roe Finnegan
Environment & Heritage:	Paddy Egan
Schools:	6th Class Scoil Ursula, Sligo, and Corran College, Ballymote
Community (Individual):	Michael McDermott and Maurice Monaghan
Community (Group):	Carney Ladies' Group
Sports:	Austin Walshe
Special Award:	Fr John Carroll



2008 Cathaoirleach's Award Winners with Cathaoirleach Cllr Seamus Kilgannon & elected members.

CIVIC EVENTS

The Communications Office co-ordinated arrangements for a number of receptions at County Hall during 2008, including:

- Calry Development Association to honour their services to the local community.
- Fr. Dominic Gillooly on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of his Ordination.
- Joe Cunningham to honour His Lifelong Services to Irish Traditional Music.
- North Sligo Athletics Club to honour their success in the All-Ireland Club Finals.
- Teachers Union of Ireland – Retired Members Association.
- Young Scientists to honour their success in the 2008 BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition.

- Sligo Community Games Executive Committee to honour their services to Community Games.
- GAA Executive Committee on the occasion of the GAA National Conference, Sligo.
- Sligo Vocational Schools who represented Sligo Vocational Schools Senior County Team All-Ireland & Connacht Inter-County B Champions.
- Coolbock N.S. for their success at the Agri Aware 'Meet the Spuds' Competition.
- The Irish Wheelchair Association.
- The Sisters of Nazareth, Sligo, to honour their outstanding service to the community.
- Tom Higgins to honour his Lifelong Service to Tennis.
- Western Drama Festival in celebration of 65 Years.
- Bronagh Kerins and Orla Devaney to honour their selection to represent Ireland on the U-17 Soccer Team.
- Everyman Productions to honour the success of 'Juno and the Paycock' in the Isle of Man Easter Festival & the All-British Finals 2008.
- His Excellency Ambassador P. S. Raghavan, Indian Ambassador.
- His Excellency Ambassador David Lee, Taiwanese Ambassador.
- Community Games Participants to honour their achievements in the 2008 Community Games.
- County Sligo Golf Club Male Voice Choir to honour their success in the North Wales Choral Festival 2008.
- Sligo-Leitrim Youths in recognition of their achievement in winning the Boys U16 Section of the Italy Cup 2006.
- Sligo Hurlers to honour their achievement of winning the Nicky Rackard Cup.
- Special Olympics to celebrate 30 Years of Special Olympics Ireland.
- Tubbercurry Golf Club in honour of their fundraising work for the Irish Welfare & Information Centre, Birmingham.

STAY IN TOUCH

To register for news and information updates from Sligo County Council, visit www.sligococo.ie, email communications@sligococo.ie or telephone 071 9111017.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Corporate Services

HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS

Sligo County Council assisted 446 Students under the current Higher Education Grants Scheme. There were 172 new applicants and 274 continuing Students. The scheme is administered by the Council on behalf of the Department of Education and Science.

In the academic year 2008/2009, Sligo County Council allocated almost €270,000 in Social Maintenance Grant assistance. A total of €2.3 million was allocated by Sligo County Council to Students in maintenance and fees.

While the Minister for Education and Science has indicated that the administration of the scheme will be the responsibility of the Vocational Education Committees in future years, formal confirmation to this effect has not been issued and provision for the administration of the scheme in the next academic year has been included in this year's Annual Budget.

ELECTIONS

A high quality Register of Electors is essential for the successful operation of the electoral system and of the democratic process itself. Sligo County Council prepares the Register of Electors annually and, as always, a major effort was made to achieve the highest possible degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness in compiling the Register. The Draft Register of Electors was printed on the 1st November 2008. There were 49,920 electors registered on the 2009/1010 Draft Register.

NUMBER OF ELECTORS BY AREA

Ballymote	8,109
Dromore West	8,175
Sligo/Drumcliffe	12,563
Sligo/Strandhill	13,051
Tubbercurry	8,022

HUMAN RESOURCES

Sligo County Council's Human Resources Department is responsible for the delivery of all aspects of the Human Resources function for Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council. Its main functions include Recruitment, Staff Training and Development, Staff Welfare, Industrial Relations, Performance Management and Development, Superannuation and Equality & Diversity.

The general aim of the Council's Recruitment policy is to attract and retain competent staff, with the qualifications and experience necessary to provide an efficient and effective service to the community. During 2008, the Human Resource Department conducted competitions for 31 posts for which interviews were held spanning 42 days. This involved interviewing 278 applicants.

During 2008, work commenced on the implementation of a new HR payroll system. The background to the project is that a large number of local authorities identified as a priority the need for an automated HR system. This project was developed to respond to this need and also to address the findings of a number of reports on the future direction of the Human Resources function within Local Authorities. While this project started out to deliver a HR package, it was soon enlarged to include Time Recording, Payroll and Superannuation. The procurement

process has been conducted on behalf of all Local Authorities by the Local Government Computer Services Board (LGCSB) and CORE International were awarded the contract.

There are a number of structures in place nationally to ensure that the project is delivered on time and within cost. These include:

The Project Board

The role of the board is to safeguard the interests of the participating authorities, and all the relevant stakeholders. The Project Board meets monthly.

The Standards Committee

The National Standards Committee was set up by the Project Board to make decisions, in a timely fashion, on operational HR, Payroll and Superannuation standard and policy matters which arise during the configuration and pilot stages of the implementation of the project, with reference to best practice and established or widespread procedures within the sector.

Implementation Locally

To advance the project locally, the following groups were formed during the year:

The Steering Group

A Local Steering Group was formed with responsibility to:

- agree the scope of the project and the staging of the roll-out of each module.
- ensure that the project delivers value for money and a cost conscious approach is taken to the project.
- ensure that adequate resources are committed to deliver on the programme.
- agree an approach to change management issues.

The Implementation Group

A Local Implementation Group was also formed, with a role to:

- provide a forum for consultation and to facilitate the co-ordination of activities and the resolution of issues arising.
- agree a draft implementation plan for the project to include; target dates, training plan and communication approach.
- consider issues referred to the group by the Steering Committee.

THE PROJECT TEAM

Four staff were assigned to the project with two staff from the Payroll department to be assigned for the payroll implementation. Support is also being provided from staff in Sligo Borough Council, Payroll, IT and HR Departments).

During 2008, the team concentrated on the collection of data to populate the new System and verified a large volume of the information currently held on paper and electronically with staff.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Corporate Services

In December 2008, CORE (supplier of the system) came on site to bring across the Council's data to their system with a view to going live with the first module early in 2009.

Listed below are the modules contained in the HR/Payroll/Superannuation system in the order of proposed roll-out.

First phase

- Organisation Structure & Department Returns
- Recruitment
- Payroll (indoor)
- Payroll(outdoor)
- Leave, Time & Attendance & Employee Self Service
- Superannuation

Second phase

- Performance Management (PMDS)
- Training
- Health & Safety

TRAINING

2008 was an extremely busy year for the Training Office. A large variety of courses were delivered throughout the year, catering for a broad range of staff.

A very comprehensive Training Schedule was prepared for 2008 identifying 48 courses types to be delivered. These courses were identified through the Health & Safety Department, Organisational needs and through the Personal Development Plan (PDP) process.

Due to the proposed amendment to Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (Construction) (Amendment 2) Regulations 2008 which comes into effect on the 6th July, 2009, a large focus was placed on the Signing, Lighting & Guarding course in 2008. 8 of these courses were delivered in total, catering for a maximum of 8 participants per course.

Health & Safety Training was also a high priority with numerous programmes i.e Supervising Safely, Managing Safely in Construction, Directing Safely, Fall Arrest Training, Safety Representatives Training, Fire Warden Training, Safe Pass, Confined Spaces, Permanent Signage, Slings & Signalling of loads delivered.

Courses in the area of Customer Services were also delivered i.e. Communicating across Language Barriers, Managing Conflict and Dealing with Difficult People,

The Supervisory Skills Development Programme which dealt with all areas of Supervisory Skills proved very popular. Topics such as Performance Management Development System (PMDS), coaching, mentoring, performance management, managing conflict, team performances etc. 2 different programmes were developed – 1 programme catered for Grades 6s, 7s & analogous grades, with the other catering for Grades 4s, 5s & analogous grades. It is anticipated that subject to available funding, a further roll-out of these programmes will take place in 2009.

Due to budgetary constraints, 2009 will see a much different approach as regards the Training & Development of Staff. It is anticipated that much of the training delivered will be in the area of Health & Safety and essential training and the issue of using the services of staff as in-house trainers may need to be explored.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Accessibility Activities 2008

DISABILITY STRATEGY FUNDING

The following sets out a breakdown of the works carried out under the Disability Strategy Funding in 2008:

Capital Expenditure:	€279,298
Current Expenditure:	€50,000

Capital Expenditure Works

- Loop System in County Council Chamber.
- Signage & Handrails at County Hall, Unit 6 Cleveragh & Enniscrone Area Office.
- Visual Alarms in Library, County Hall, St. Anne's Place & Market Yard.
- Disabled Parking Bay at County Hall.
- Emergency Evacuation Chairs.
- Signage at Teach Laighne, Tubbercurry.
- Alterations to Disabled Parking Bay at Teach Laighne, Tubbercurry.
- Automatic Doors for Teach Laighne, County Hall, Market Yard & Community & Enterprise.
- Stairlift in County Library.
- Road Markings at County Hall.
- Disabled Toilets Works in various Council buildings.
- Alterations to steps at County Hall.
- Pedestrian Crossing at Bridge Street (in progress).
- Ramps at County Library.
- Stairlift in Market Yard.
- Automatic Doors, Signage, Induction Loop, Chairlift, Handrails at Fire Station (to be completed early 2009).
- Handrails, Automatic Doors, Signage, Step Nosing at Enniscrone Fire Station (to be completed early 2009).
- Handrails, Signage, Automatic Doors, Induction Loop at Tubbercurry Fire Station (to be completed early 2009).
- Highlighting of Disabled Parking Bays in Sligo Town (to be completed early in 2009).
- Improved Access to Kilglass Cemetery (to be completed early in 2009).

Current Expenditure Works

- Consultancy Fees in respect of design of pedestrian walkway at Bridge Street.
- Production of Podcast for websites and local radio.
- Open Local Government Costs.
- Audio Copy of Directory of Services.
- Text Alert System.

EXCELLENCE THROUGH ACCESSIBILITY AWARDS

The National Disability Authority's Excellence Through Accessibility Award was presented to Sligo County Council in respect of County Hall on 3 December 2008. County Hall achieved the second highest level of the award, which is Quality.



The award was presented by Minister John Moloney, TD, Minister of State with Special Responsibility for Equality, Disability and Mental Health to Councillor Deirdre Healy McGowan, Leas Cathaoirleach, Sligo County Council and Tony Parkinson, Access Officer, Sligo County Council.

Evaluation for the Award was carried out under the following headings:

Access to Quality Customer Service

Sligo County Council consulted extensively with a Disability Consultative Committee and developed an Implementation Plan for accessibility. The Authority is customer focused and developed and launched a new Customer Charter. The Council also has an Equality and Diversity Public Services Access Charter.

Access to the Built Environment

The car park at County Hall has been upgraded to include three accessible parking bays and a drop off area. The main and side entrance doors are clearly defined and are fitted with power-assisted doors to provide easy access for all building users. Access routes within the building are spacious and unobstructed. Reception counters throughout the building are accessible to wheelchair users and fitted with loop systems to accommodate hearing aid users. A variety of seating types is provided for the public in corridors and reception areas. To improve safety for building users, the open risers in the main staircase have been filled in.

Access to services delivered via Information and Communication Technology

Sligo County Council has shown great initiative in relation to information and communications. The Council has introduced audio podcasts on its website in response to user feedback. The Authority has launched a text based communications system for alerting traffic wardens to obstructions caused by illegally parked vehicles. The Council website is structured with accessibility in mind. To ensure ongoing accessibility for the website, the Authority has a clear development plan in place with performance indicators in place and timescales outlined.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Sligo County Library

SLIGO LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a responsive, accessible and inclusive library service for all our customers, which fosters reading, stimulates the imagination and contributes to lifelong learning and cultural recreation.

NEW LIBRARY WEBSITE

Sligo Library Service has committed itself to launch a newly developed website in 2008. This website will act as a public access portal allowing the general public unrivalled access. Information such as opening hours, contact details, events, activities and images can all be accessed in an easily navigate able format.

The fundamental reason of the library, a source of literary work; fiction, non fiction, reference and local history, will be extensively portrayed on separate pages within the framework of the website. Electronic online access to Encyclopedia Britannica has also become a reality in 2008 with all members able to access this comprehensive resource via the library webpage using their library user ID.

TEACHER RESOURCE CENTRE AND SCHOOLS SERVICE

Sligo libraries have traditionally provided a schools service to all 68 primary schools in the County. This provision allows extra reading material to supplement the schools' own resources. In providing this service, the library van aims to visit each school twice per school year. In 2008, 13,849 books were provided to all the primary schools in Sligo.

An exciting new edition to this service became a reality in October 2008 when Sligo Library opened the Library Educational resource centre. This centre, located in the museum next door to Central Library, will allow teachers (on appointment) to access and browse our extensive stock. Juvenile non fiction stock on topics of interest could be one target area selected by various teachers. Once selected, the stock can be checked out to the relevant school and delivered in a prompt manner by our library delivery service.

MULTICULTURAL POLICIES

Sligo Libraries are committed to multiculturalism and recognise the importance of the various non Irish national communities in our society as a whole. As such, a number of implemented strategies have continued.

A foreign language pamphlet detailing the library service aimed primarily at the Polish community was released in early 2008.

A link from our website to the Sligo Immigrant Organisation website <http://sioinfo.com> was established in mid 2008 to further portray our services to this section of the community. Our policy of foreign title collection development, both adult and juvenile has continued, increasing stock throughout the year.

Access to electronic resources such as library pressdisplay allows non Irish nationals keep abreast of developments at home by reading a selection of their daily newspapers. This resource portrays over 500 full content digital replicas from 70 countries in 37 languages.

DISABILITY ACCESS

Disability Access continued to be a priority for Sligo County Libraries in 2008. As well as the provision of car parking, disabled toilets, directional signage, software (JAWS and ZOOMTEXT) and induction loops, increased addition of ramps and a stair lift for ease of access became a main priority. This was especially so for the central library and museum building in the hope that all sections of our community feel at ease whilst using this public service.



New wheelchair accessibility at Sligo Library.

FORCE 10

Under the editorship of local writer Dermot Healy, Sligo Library published the 13th issue of Force 10 magazine in June 2008. This re-launch, held on 20th June in Sligo Central Library, was greeted with huge critical acclaim from both local and national writers and artists. With the usual format of poetry, prose and illustrations this was the largest issue in its history and had a central theme of travel and emigration. Among many writers featured were Niall Williams, Aidan Higgins, Joan McBreen, Leland Bardwell, and Gerald Dawe. Illustrations included work by Sean McSweeney, Conor O'Malley, Nick Miller, John Minihan and Michael Wann.

NIALL WILLIAMS – WRITER IN RESIDENCE

Mr Niall Williams, twice IMPAC nominated author, began his six-month tenure with Sligo County Library in the autumn of 2007. During that time he took to his position with gusto and enthusiasm undertaking several projects.

Two series of writers' workshops, each fully subscribed and under the guidance of Niall were held for three months before and three months after Christmas. He visited numerous schools and other groups to give courses in creative writing as well as meeting "budding writers" informally at his office. Courses in literary history were also conducted for library staff over a period of twelve weeks which gave a valuable insight to library staff into the chronological background of the material with which they work.

A Readers and Writers Festival Weekend in March 2008 was arranged by Sligo Library and the Arts Office to celebrate the tenure of Mr. Niall Williams as writer-in-residence. Lectures, readings and workshops were held in various venues countywide and were considered by all to be a great success.

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Mr. Williams returned briefly to run an intensive one day course in May 2008 for Leaving Certificate students in preparation for their various English exam papers.

Due to his tireless work and popularity, Mr. Williams has returned in October 2008 to begin another eagerly anticipated residency concentrating this year on young readers. He will be in Sligo every Wednesday and Thursday for consultation and can be contacted by email at nwilliams@sligococo.ie

SLIGO LIBRARY BOOK CLUBS AND WRITERS' GROUPS

To further encourage reader development among our customers, Sligo Libraries have a number of Book Clubs set up in various branches. These clubs promote the pleasures of reading and develop the members' appreciation of literature at all levels. Please contact the various Branch Libraries for more details.

Sligo Central Library

Inkwell Writers group, facilitated by Geraldine Finn, meet every Wednesday at 8pm in Museum Building, Stephen Street.

Central Library Book Club meets at 6.45 on last Thursday of every month.

Catacombs Book Club, Sara Book Club and the Maugherow Book Club are also supported by Sligo Central Library.

Tubbercurry Community Library

Leyney Writers' Group have been established a number of years now with two successful publications behind them. This group continues to meet regularly to share and discuss their latest work, facilitated by Geraldine Finn. This process should hopefully culminate in another publication due early next year 2009.

Bookworms Bookclub meet on the second last Thursday of every month.

Active Retirement Bookclub meets on the last Thursday of every month.

PLUS SURVEY

Results from the Public Library User Survey, taken in September 2007, were released in early 2008. Positive feedback from the comprehensive survey included:

- Sligo Central Library is the 8th busiest library in the country.
- Staff helpfulness was remarked on with an average of 81% of respondents stating it was "very good".
- Staff assistance was also viewed as being very comprehensive with an average of 80% of respondents feeling it was "very good".
- The library as a secure and safe place to visit also fared well with an average of 77% of respondents feeling it was "very safe".

Users Sligo Library Service

AVERAGE AGE:	CENTRAL LIBRARY	TUBBERCURRY LIBRARY
14 or under	1.2%	-
15 to 19	3.9%	1.6%
20 to 24	6.1%	7.6%
25 to 34	14.3%	21.7%
35 to 44	24.1%	21.7%
45 to 54	20.4%	24.5%
55 to 64	14.5%	10.9%
65 to 74	11.7%	9.2%
75 or over	3.7%	2.7%
number of cases	489	184
% response rate	97.4%	96.3%

Sligo County Library Issues January - September 2008

LIBRARY	SECTION (JAN-MAR 08)	1ST QUARTER (APR-JUNE 08)	2ND QUARTER (JUL-SEPT 08)	3RD QUARTER
Central Library	Adult	23,502	22,299	24,658
Central Library	Juvenile	12,430	12,189	13,352
Tubbercurry	Adult	4,708	4,422	5,402
Tubbercurry	Juvenile	3,848	3,574	4,162
Reference Library	Adult	1,195	1,258	1,335
Reference Library	Juvenile	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ballymote	Adult	1,699	1,389	1,411
Ballymote	Juvenile	1,238	1,143	1,217
Enniscrone	Adult	1,642	1,688	1,740
Enniscrone	Juvenile	1,113	960	1,419

Borrow books 2008: statistics January to September 185 received, 214 sent.

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Sligo County Library



Tubbercurry Library.



A series of snapshots portraying the wide variety of events/activities that are held by Sligo County Libraries.



Shane Reynolds, Alan Roberts and Seamus Heron playing Irish traditional music as part of the Seachtain na Gaeilge celebrations.



Mr Niall Williams, Author and writer - in - residence, Cathaoirleach Councillor Jude Devins, Pauline Brennan, Donal Tinney, Bernadette Ward and Ultan McNasser (Sligo Library staff) at the official start of the second residency of the writer - in - residence.



Áine Ní Fhuarain and Niamh McKenna, winners of their respective categories for the 2008 "design a t-shirt" competition, being presented with their prizes in Sligo Central Library by Ultan McNasser, Executive Librarian.



Donal Tinney (County Librarian), Dermot Healy (Author and editor of Force 10), Author Mary Branley, Councillor Declan Bree and Cathaoirleach Councillor Seamus Kilgannon at the launch of Force 10.



Malachy Gillen and Brenda Cawley (Sligo Library Staff) receiving a donation of foreign language books from Piotr Rachwald and Malgorzata Kmera (Sligo Immigrant Organisation).

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Sligo County Library

ACTIVITIES/EVENTS DURING 2008

JANUARY 2008

- Tubbercurry Community Library Creative Writing Workshops throughout January 2008.
- Active Retired group – Art classes throughout January 2008.

FEBRUARY 2008

Sligo Central Library

- 1st February - St. Brigids Cross Workshop with the Meehan Sisters.
- Central Library Bookclub members attended Ennis Book Club Festival 29th February to March 2nd 2008.

Tubbercurry Community Library

- Kids Own publishing display 28th February – 5th March.
- Various Bookclub members attended Ennis Book Festival 29th February to March 2nd.

MARCH 2008

Sligo Central Library

- 2nd March - National Tree Week - distribution of 100 sapling trees to customers - Native stock including Oak, Ash, Birch, Rowan and Alder.
- 4th March - Easter Crafts Activity with the Meehan sisters.
- 5th March - Storyteller Rab Fulton. Tales of legend and folklore.
- 6th March -World Book Day - Globe house international stories and launch of book "Tales from the Globe".
- 7th March - Launch of Writers Festival Weekend 2008.
- 13th March – Seachtain na Gaeilge - Irish traditional Music session Tubbercurry Community Library.
- Seachtain na Gaeilge 3rd – 17th March - Sean Nos Dancing with Cos Cos Dance Group.
- 6th March -World book Day - Author visit with Michael Mullen.
- 7th March - Poetry Reading - Julie O'Callaghan.
- 8th March - Author reading - Brennan Briggs.

APRIL 2008

Sligo Central Library

- 15th April - Art school visit; "The battle of the books" with the Mercy College.

Tubbercurry Community Library

- 30th April - Visit from local Montessori School which included a storytelling session.

MAY 2008

Sligo Central Library

- May 1st to 31st - Bealtaine Festival - Internet Classes with Benny Morgan.
- 15th May - Ulster Scots Heritage events; Storytelling and Music.

- 16th May - Archaeology Book Launch. Locally-based Finnish archaeologist Tatyjana Kytmamnow launched her latest work "Portal Tombs in the Landscape – the Chronology, Morphology and Landscape Settings of the Portal Tombs of Ireland, Wales and Cornwall".

Tubbercurry Community Library

- 7th May, 14th, 21st and 28th May – internet tuition classes with Benny Morgan.
- 22nd May - Anti Litter Environment workshops with storyteller Mary Lorraine McHugh.

JUNE 2008

Sligo Central Library

- June 3rd and 4th - Anti Litter Environment workshops with storyteller Mary Lorraine McHugh.
- June 20th – Launch of FORCE 10 issue 13.

JULY 2008

Sligo Central Library

- 1st to 9th July - Children's summer camp.
- 1st July - Liz Weir, storytelling.
- 2nd July - Thompson's Magic Show and Fancy Dress.
- 3rd July - Glen Boyne Rap Classes and "Your Man Puppets" Puppet Show.
- 4th July - Meehan sisters, Crafts Activity.
- 8th July - Joe McGowan, storyteller. Tales of folklore and customs.
- 9th July - Rosaleen Holland, Crafts Activity.

AUGUST 2008

Sligo Central Library

- August 28th Heritage Week - "On the Pigs back; the Pig in Irish Culture". A lecture by Joe McGowan.
- August 29th - "Irish History Live" interactive show by Michael Moylan Tubbercurry Community Library.
- Leyney Writers Literary Festival 12th August 2008.

SEPTEMBER 2008

Sligo Central Library

- Positive Ageing Week: September 25th, October 2nd and October 9th at 6.45 - Internet tuition classes with Benny Morgan.

Tubbercurry Community Library

- 18th and 26th September – St. Attracta's College transition year students visit Tubbercurry library and shown all the various facilities and services.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Sligo County Library

ACTIVITIES/EVENTS DURING 2008

OCTOBER 2008

Sligo Central library

- Children's Book Festival 2008.
- October 2nd - "Irish History Live" interactive show with Michael Moylan.
- October 7th - "book festival crafts activity" at 10am and 11.30 with the Meehan's.
- October 10th – Art Class and workshop at 11.45 and 1pm with Ailish O'Donnell.
- October 22nd – National Print Museum workshops at 10am, 12 noon and 2pm.
- October 29th – Halloween crafts activity at 11am and 12.30pm with the Meehan's.

Tubbercurry Community Library

- Children's book festival 2008.
- 15th October – Author visit – Keith Charters.
- 16th October – Author visit – Liam Farrell.
- 24th October – Author Visit – John Quinn.
- 30th October - Halloween crafts activity with the Meehan's.

NOVEMBER 2008

Sligo Central Library

- National Science Week: November 11th to 17th.
- November 17th – Calry scout library visit to facilitate "book reader" badge.
- November 21st – "Science is magic" interactive show with Michael Moylan.

Tubbercurry Community Library

- National Science week:
- November 10th to 14th –Workshops with Sustainable Energy Ireland. 18 schools involved, three sessions per day over a five day period.
- November 11th at 8pm – Leyney Writers Group "open mike" evening.
- November 29th at 11am – Internet tuition classes with Benny Morgan.

DECEMBER 2008

Sligo Central Library

- December 4th and 11th at 6.30 – Sustainable energy lectures with Dr. John Hession.
- December 6th at 11am – Internet tuition classes with Benny Morgan.
- December 5th –Volunteer centre stand to promote various volunteer activities in the County.
- December 1st to 16th – Exhibition highlighting the campaign "16 days of action against Violence against Women".
- December 11th at 10.30 and 12 noon – Christmas card making activity with Rosaleen Holland.
- December 17th at 10.30 – Toddler preschool stories and songs.

HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Civil Defence

Civil Defence was present at seventy events during 2008, with May to September being the busiest time. Civil Defence attended Gymkhanas, Triathlons, Golf tournaments, Major sporting fixtures, Charity swims, Musical festivals, Horse Shows, and Car Rallies to name but a few and without the assistance of organisations like Civil Defence providing the much needed skills like first aid, stewarding etc., many of these events would not be able to go ahead.

Apart from assisting at events as mentioned above, Civil Defence is always preparing its volunteers, through ongoing training, to assist with whatever crisis comes its way.

MAJOR EMERGENCIES

Sligo Civil Defence is not only a service for covering community events but is constantly preparing itself to be ready to respond to an emergency call if and when received. The organisation has been given a specific role within the Major Emergency framework document and this responsibility is reflected in our intense training programme. Sligo Civil Defence has a core group of around 80 volunteers willing and committed to volunteer at relatively short notice and a further 20 or so available for the more minor roles in the event of a major emergency. The volunteers enjoy the training provided and are anxious to put their training into practice. Sligo Civil Defence strives to ensure that training is informative and varied to continue to motivate volunteers to not only remain with the organisation but to feel confident and useful when their assistance is called upon.

Sligo Civil Defence take part in a training exercise with the Fire Service.



COMMUNITY

During Civil Defence Annual County Exercise, held on the grounds of Saehan Media this year, the Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council, Councillor Jude Devins, commended the Civil Defence Teams for their valuable work in the community, their time and commitment to training and the fact that such a large number (70) had given up their free time to spend a day putting their skills into practice thus ensuring their preparedness to deal with situations placed before them. The Civil Defence organisation is widely respected, and has attracted many plaudits for the efficient and professional way they carry out their duties.

It is through attending at such events that recruitment to the organisation begins. Being in the public eye highlights what the organisation is about and, through conversation with, and observation of those attending such events, the public see what and how the organisation is all about and from there, the candle of curiosity is lit which, on a lot of occasions, leads to recruitment of new volunteers or re-instatement of lapsed volunteers.

VOLUNTEERS

At a presentation to long serving members and others receiving certificates for various skill levels, Mr. Ned Gleeson (Civil Defence Board member) emphasised the valued role of the volunteer in our community: 'Volunteerism has been the backdrop to the social and economic history of Ireland, particularly in times of economic uncertainty, where ambition was tempered by scarcity of finance, our society relied heavily on the goodwill of the volunteer. While it is not in these volunteers' nature to proclaim their role or achievements, it is important to convey the universal regard in which they are held by every sector of our community'.

While the economic landscape is being transformed, it is hoped the tradition and culture of volunteerism will not only be maintained, but indeed increase and Civil Defence is ready to welcome the influx of people who, through no fault of their own, will have time on their hands and might consider joining the organisation to broaden / learn new skills through our in depth training programs.

TRAINING PROGRAMME

Anyone considering carrying out valuable service to their local community should explore the possibility of becoming a Civil Defence volunteer. A multi-skilled training programme is provided over the winter months from October through to April throughout the County, and volunteers will be instructed in First Aid, Rescue, Communications, Welfare and a range of other useful skills.

Civil Defence volunteer demonstrates First Aid as part of the training programme.



HOUSING, CORPORATE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Sligo Fire Authority

Sligo Fire Authority is continually responding to the needs of our community through the development of efficient and modern fire service in line with best national and international standards of service. The increased emphasis in responding to operational incidents in a safe and co-ordinated manner is achieved with the implementation of the "Incident Command System". This provides an improved safe work system and incident management system for use at all incidents. Developments continue in the provision of **Community Fire Safety including new initiatives to provide better value in reaching wider focus groups. The most recent being considered is in conjunction with the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in which it is hoped that monitored smoke detectors (and panic buttons) can be provided through community and voluntary groups to the elderly.** Such initiatives result in improved preventative and early intervention measures rather than the traditional response based approach. Prevention is the key to fire safety and is much more cost efficient than response.

The fire-fighters work now includes prevention and community education but shall continue to be dominated by the emergency response to incidents such as fires, road traffic accidents, air accidents, chemical incidents and more recently biological incidents.

The Fire Authority ensures the fire safety of the built environment through certification, inspection and enforcement. The Authority also provides information and training on fire safety management and fire fighting to all sectors and groups in the community. This includes over a thousand national school pupils that visit the stations each year, hundreds of adults formally trained in the use of fire extinguishers and the ongoing community safety programme using the mobile demonstration unit.

The emergency response to incidents is provided from the Fire Brigade Stations in Sligo, Ballymote, Tubbercurry and Enniscrone and is supplemented by Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Donegal if required. These Brigades attended 909 incidents in the 2008. This is the second highest number of calls for assistance on record.

There were several tragic incidents in 2008, again emphasising the need for community awareness to the dangers we all face in our lives which in most instances can be mitigated or removed completely by taking simple and reasonable safety measures. These measures are highlighted during "Fire Safety Week" and each station runs a programme of events aimed at involving and educating the public in these measures.

People must remain vigilant in the home and on the roads as this is where most life threatening incidents occur each year.

The most significant advancement in the service provided has been with the introduction of a "Framework for Major Emergency Management" under which the primary response agencies have agreed protocols and major emergency response plans for each participating agency to ensure a coordinated and appropriate response to larger incidents and Major Emergencies. This includes specialised training and the provision of resources.

TRAINING

There is a very strict training and disciplinary regime in the Fire Brigade as is necessitated by the sometimes difficult and dangerous environment in which Fire-fighters work, as has been regrettably highlighted by the recent tragedies. The responsibility now placed upon the "Incident Commander" in dealing with even minor events is continually increasing as training highlights the need for improvement.

Fire-fighters undergo over one hundred hours training every year. This includes the latest advances in techniques used to tackle the fires known as "flashover" and "backdraft" and the latest methods of extraction of casualties from vehicles involved in incidents. This is particularly important in view of the advances in active safety technology employed in the modern car, airbags and seatbelt tensioning do save lives the instant an accident occurs but can pose a serious threat to rescue personnel when working around undeployed airbags and seatbelt tensioners.

The Brigade now holds "block" R.T.A. training over a number of days, in which the necessary skills are learnt and practised. Sligo has now formed two crash rescue competition teams as part of "Rescue Organisation Ireland". This is aimed at improving skills through international competition between brigades in the rescue of persons from crashed vehicles. The Fire-fighters participating volunteer weeks of their time to participate in training and competitions for no gain other than serve the community to the best of their ability.

Sligo continues to provide a "hot fire" training centre and offers this facility nationally for the training of Fire-fighters throughout the country. This facility is used to demonstrate and train Fire-fighters in the latest techniques and equipment necessary for their protection and the saving of life. The Fire Service has qualified medical first responders (with Defibrillators) in all Stations and in the Sligo Headquarters for over seven years and continues to develop skills in this specialised area.

The Breathing Apparatus training centre is used as a national training centre to train staff in proper search and rescue techniques and in the use of Breathing Apparatus in fire situations. This centre has received capital funding again this year for its continuing development in this area of expertise in recognition of its importance nationally.

Local industries have also facilitated the Brigade in carrying out Pre-Fire Training in which various types of incidents are staged and training undertaken so that should a similar incident occur the Brigade will have the necessary skills and resources needed to deal with it in an efficient and professional manner.

**HOUSING, CORPORATE
& EMERGENCY SERVICES
DIRECTORATE**

Sligo Fire Authority

COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY

Talks were given to the elderly and other groups on fire safety. Groups of primary school students visited the stations and watched fire safety videos and demonstrations, in all approximately 1000 students visited the station.

Groups from secondary schools, Sligo Institute of Technology and the local community also participated in courses held in the Fire Station.

These courses reinforce the need for vigilance when it comes to fire safety and brings this message back to their homes, schools and workplaces.

The Fire Authority processed over 128 Fire Safety Certificate applications as required under Building Control Legislation. These applications covered a wide range of premises from Apartment Blocks, Hotels, and Shops to large commercial developments. Inspections were carried out under the various licensing legislation covering nearly every type of premises from petroleum stores to dance licences. The Fire Authority made comment on all transfer of licences before the Courts and carried out numerous during performance inspections of dance halls, public houses and workplaces to ensure the Fire Safety Standards were being upheld. Generally the level of co-operation received when advice is given is very good.

FIRE STATIONS AND APPLIANCES

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government have provided over €170,000 in funding for operational equipment, appliances and stations in 2008.

The provision of the new Fire Station in Ballymote is well advanced and it is hoped that the new station shall be operational within the next year.



Hazardous substance incident being dealt with by the brigade in Gas Tight Suits.



Fire Officer finds possible cause of house fire.



One of the numerous incidents where the occupants were successfully removed from the vehicle.

An aerial photograph showing a large residential development with many houses, some under construction, and a modern wastewater treatment plant with several circular tanks and buildings. The background features rolling green hills and a distant town.

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Road Transportation & Safety

NATIONAL ROAD DESIGN

Route selection has been carried out and a preferred route has been identified for all National Primary routes in the county, including the N4 (Dublin Road), the N15 (Donegal Road), the N16 (Manorhamilton Road) and the N17 (Galway Road).

N17 Tobercurry Bypass

A Peer Review was carried out in early 2008 which recommended that the design should be changed at the northern end of the scheme. Following this the Preliminary Design and environmental studies were revised. A cost estimate was prepared which was followed by a Risk Assessment Workshop in accordance with NRA's Project Appraisal Guidelines.

N17 Collooney to Tobercurry

Work continued in relation to preliminary design and environmental studies on N17 Collooney to Tobercurry.

N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin

A traffic study was carried out in relation to N4 Collooney to Castlebaldwin scheme which assessed the long term capacity of the roundabouts at Collooney.

N4/N15 Sligo to County Boundary

A route for the N4/N15 Sligo to County Boundary was adopted by Sligo County and Borough Councils in 2006. Ryan Hanley WSP Ltd., Consulting Engineers were appointed in November, 2007 to advance the design through Preliminary Design, EIS and CPO stage. In 2008 the Ground Investigation Works and Topographical Survey were carried out and the Preliminary Design and Environmental Studies were progressed.

Sligo Western Bypass

In 2008 a Feasibility Study and Environmental Report were completed for a Sligo Western Bypass.

ROAD TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY – NATIONAL ROADS – 2008

(1) National Primary Pavement Improvement Works

(a) N15 South of Castlegal (North of Cliffooney): 2.5km of the N15 was improved under a pilot strengthening scheme. The pilot scheme consisted of in-situ recycling of the existing pavement utilising bituminous stabilising agents and cement. The recycled layer was 300mm in thickness and was overlaid with a conventional hot rolled asphalt surfacing course. The contract was carried out by Northstone (NI) Limited and the recycling element of the works was undertaken by specialist subcontractors using specialised recycling plant and equipment. The overall scheme was 2.5km in length and consisted of approximately 19,500 sq metres of road payment. The process is a more environmentally friendly solution to the upgrading of road surfaces than the more conventional method of laying new bitumen macadam on top of the old as:

- It reduces the need for vast numbers of lorries drawing material to the site and the associated carbon emissions.

- It reduces the need to quarry materials.
- It reduces the amount of bitumen (oil) required as it utilises the bitumen already present to provide strength.
- It reduces the impact on the road network in general as it reduces the numbers of heavy goods vehicles on the road.



This is the first time this process has been tried in Ireland and it has created much interest in the industry. The grant received was €1.405m.

(b) €25,000 was allocated for National Primary Roads pavement assessment.

(2) N59 Pavement and Minor Improvements

The N.R.A. funded the design and the archaeology survey for the future realignment of N59 from Farranyharpy to Ballygreighan.

(3) National Primary Accident Remedial/Safety Measures

The National Roads Authority allocated a grant of €175,000 in total for schemes at:

- N4 at Ardloy (€35k)
- N17 at Templehouse (20,000)
- N4 at Collooney Roundabout (€70k)
- N17 - Pedestrian Crossing at Ballinacarrow (€20k)
- N17 - Cross-roads at Templehouse (€20,000)
- N17 – Junction at Drumbaun (€30k)

(4) National Primary Accident Remedial/Safety Measures

A grant of €185,000 was allocated for National Primary Road Winter Maintenance and €40,000 for N59 Winter Maintenance. This was used for spreading salt on the roads during frost and snow periods.

(5) National Roads Ordinary Maintenance Grants

The N.R.A. allocated a grant of €493,000 for National Primary Road Maintenance. A grant of €147,498 was granted for N59 Ordinary Maintenance.

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Road Transportation & Safety

(6) National Road Special Maintenance

Grant of €60,843 was allocated for National Primary Roads and €16,019 for N59. This grant related to the treatment of noxious weeds along the roads.

(7) National Primary Road Annual Resurfacing

The N.R.A. allocated a grant of €225,550 for National Primary Road Resurfacing. Surfacing was carried out at the following locations.

- N15 at Cliffooney
- N15 at Grange
- N15 South of Borough Boundary.

(8) National Road Bridge Maintenance

A grant of €45,000 was allocated for National Primary Bridge Maintenance and €16,000 was allocated for N59 Bridge Maintenance. This was used for doing minor repairs/maintenance at bridges.

NON-NATIONAL ROAD GRANTS - 2008

(1) Specific Improvement Schemes

(a) R292 Strandhill Road/Knappaghmore

A grant of €606,608 was received for this scheme. Road re-alignment, accommodation works, undergrounding of services and new services were laid for the scheme. The scheme is now substantially completed.

(b) R284 – Drumaskibbole/Glenagoolagh

Rock excavation /earthworks and drainage continued along the re-aligned road section.

A grant of €470,592 was received for this scheme.

(c) R294 at Mullaghroe

Accommodation works were carried out in 2008.

A grant of €856,941 was received for this scheme.

(d) R286 – Ballinode – Hazelwood

Land Acquisition, Accommodation Works etc. were carried out.

A grant of €274,184 was received for this scheme.

(e) R292 Tully

Approval to expend €225,000 was received from Department of Transport for stabilising the road embankment. The work was carried out and the department paid for this in 2009.

(f) First Sea Road to Finisklin Industrial Estate

€53,166 was received for this scheme.

(g) R297 – Castletown

A grant of €49,695 was received for the commencement of a scheme to realign the road. Part 8 process completed and some land acquisition/accommodation works carried out.

RESTORATION IMPROVEMENT GRANT

A grant of €7,034,000 was allocated by the Department of Transport in 2008 which funded restoration improvement of regional and local roads. This work involved laying bitumen macadam/CL 804 to strengthen/shape the roads.

Roads with a bitumen macadam surface located outside the 50 km/h speed limits were surface dressed to provide better road skid resistance.

Roads strengthened/shaped with CL 804 stone were double surface dressed.

The length of Regional and Local Roads strengthened under this programme was 101.5km.

RESTORATION MAINTENANCE GRANT

The length of Regional Roads and Local Roads surfaced under this programme was 56km.

A grant of €2,386,000 was allocated by the Department of Transport for this work.

DISCRETIONARY IMPROVEMENT GRANT

A grant of €702,000 was received from the Department of Transport. This grant is used for signage improvements, public lighting improvement, minor road re-alignment schemes, drainage improvements etc.

FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENTS

€87,500 was allocated from the Discretionary Improvement Grant [with matching funds from Development Contributions] for footpath improvements at 19 locations throughout the County.

DISCRETIONARY MAINTENANCE GRANT

A grant of €830,000 was allocated for this work. This grant is used for Maintenance (pavement maintenance, road drainage, verge maintenance, road markings etc.) of Regional Roads.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

A grant of €507,000 was allocated by the Department of Transport. This funded 17 schemes. This grant is for the improvement of non-public roads. The beneficiaries pay a contribution towards the cost of the schemes.

LOW COST SAFETY IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

A grant of €180,000 was allocated from the Department of Transport for 8 schemes throughout the county.

**INFRASTRUCTURAL
SERVICES
DIRECTORATE**

Road Transportation & Safety

BRIDGE WORKS CARRIED OUT UNDER SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENT GRANTS IN 2008

Sligo County Council carried out a programme of valuable work to maintain bridges within the county during 2008. A considerable portion of the bridge stock is over a century old and these old structures can still function satisfactorily if maintained and in some cases strengthened. Such works are usually cheaper than replacement and also help maintain the often over looked historical value of this important part of the built heritage of the county and nation.

This year substantial works were carried out to a number of bridges under the specific improvement grant scheme funded by the Department of Transport. Included were Annasheetagh Bridge near Ballintogher, Rinn Bridge, Collooney, Leekfield Bridge, Skreen and Mullanabreena Bridge R294 near Tubbercurry. Design and planning work was also progressed on the Footbridge project for Markievicz (New) Bridge in Sligo City.



Leekfield Bridge, Skreen.



Cartron Plank Bridge, North Sligo.

**INFRASTRUCTURAL
SERVICES
DIRECTORATE**

Rural Water Programme

WATER SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Water Services project office of Sligo County Council has responsibility for Project Management and Administration of all water Services Infrastructural Development Projects. The projects are funded by:

- Water Services Capital Programme
- Serviced Land Initiatives
- Rural Water Programme
- Development Levy Schemes

Sligo County Council's policy is to 'bundle' suitable schemes in order to deliver best value for money bases on the principle of economies of scale. During the past ten years the construction of 25 new treatment plants and over 180Km of new pipelines were advanced under these programmes involving a total investment of €110M.



Aerial Photo of Sligo Waste Water Treatment Plant and Sligo City.

SLIGO MAIN DRAINAGE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

This scheme involved the Design Build & Operation of a new Wastewater Treatment Plant for 50,000 population equivalent (pe), Pumping Station and Sludge Hub Centre at Finisklin, Sligo to service the existing and future needs of Sligo City and its environs. The contractor, Anglian Water International Ltd, commenced the design/build phase of the scheme in October 2006. The new treatment plant has now been commissioned and the taking Over Certificate which signifies the completion of the DB phase and formal commencement of the 20 year Operation & Maintenance contract was issued in December 2008. The outturn project cost will be approximately €37M of which the local contribution from the Council will be €9M.



New Wastewater Treatment Works During Construction.



Sligo Wastewater Treatment Works.

TEESAN / LISNALURG SEWERAGE

This Service Land Initiative scheme involves the construction of 2.7km of foul sewers, 1.1km of storm sewers, 3.8km of water-mains, one foul sewage pumping station and 0.8km twin rising main pipelines to service the entire zoned catchment area in Teesan, Lisnalurg. Construction of the scheme commenced in April 2008 and is currently well advanced. It is anticipated that the scheme will be completed during the second quarter of 2009. The estimated cost of the scheme is €3.7m of which the Council will be required to fund approximately €3m.



Pipelaying during Construction of Teesan/Lisnalurg contract.

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Rural Water Programme

SLIGO & ENVIRONS WATER SUPPLY SCHEME – STAGE 2

This scheme involves the Design Build and Operation of a new Water Treatment Plant at Kilsellagh to serve the existing and future needs of Sligo City and its environs including the Rosses Point peninsula and the North Fringe area. The new plant, which includes a new 2,200m³ treated water reservoir, will produce 4,540m³ of treated water per day and have a maximum throughput capacity of 400m³/hr. A contract was signed with Electrical & Pump Services Ltd., in December 2008. The contract will commence early in 2009. The contract period is 15 months, therefore the scheme is programmed for completion in the second quarter of 2010. The estimated Design Build project cost is €9.62m, which includes the marginal cost funded locally by the Council of almost €2.3m.



Kilsellagh Reservoir. (During Kilsellagh Dam Modification Contract)

ROSSES POINT / CREGG / BALLINCAR SEWERAGE SCHEME

This scheme relates to the provision of pumping stations and associated pipeline infrastructure for the transfer of raw sewage effluent from the Ballincar, Cregg and Rosses point catchments to Sligo Main Drainage Waste Water Treatment Works for treatment. Planning and land acquisition procedures are being progressed in parallel with detailed design and Tender Documents. In order to deliver better value for money the bundling of this scheme with Cummeen Sewerage Scheme for procurement and construction phases is currently being considered.

SLIGO SEWERAGE SCHEME (NETWORK IMPROVEMENT)

This project relates to proposed improvement works to the existing combined sewer network in Sligo City. The preliminary report highlighted 28 sections of the network which require improvement works based on network modeling and localised flooding issues. Three locations were prioritised for treatment, Pearse Road, O'Connell Street and along the railway track at Thornhill subject to funding being made available. It is also proposed to carry out CCTV surveys on other parts of the network to establish a prioritized schedule of works which will be advanced to construction stage on a phased basis. The total project cost is estimated at €5.7M.

CARRAROE SEWERAGE SCHEME – STAGE A (WILT ZONING)

This scheme involves the installation of over 4 km of new sewerage pipeline infrastructure and a new pumping station to service lands zoned as WILT in the Carraroe/Ballydrehid area. Detailed design of this element of the scheme and preparation of tender documents is ongoing at present and it is anticipated that procurement and construction phases of the project will advance subject to funding approval. The preliminary cost estimate for this scheme is €4.1M.

CARRAROE SEWERAGE SCHEME – STAGE B

A Preliminary Report was prepared in 2002 for the provision of foul and storm water drainage on a 395 hectare study area from Carraroe to Ballydrehid. The Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government recommended revision of the PR to incorporate SUDS techniques in stormwater collection and disposal. Work on the revised Preliminary Report with a reduced study area is substantially complete and a draft Preliminary Report is due for submission to SCC during 2009. The cost estimate for this stage of the project is €2.6m.

SLIGO MAIN DRAINAGE STAGE VI – CUMMEEN SEWERAGE SCHEME

This scheme involves the installation of almost 7 km of new sewerage pipeline infrastructure and a new pumping station in the Cummeen, Rathonoragh areas which will facilitate the removal of existing septic tanks and also service the future development needs of the catchment. The cost estimate for the provision of this new infrastructure is €2.3m. The purchase/takeover of existing infrastructure built by private developers will be an integral part of the project.

The Design Review Report has been submitted to the Department of Environment and pending formal approval, the scheme can proceed to the procurement and construction phases which should take approximately 18 months. This is also contingent on the granting of loan approval to meet the Council's contribution to the cost of the scheme.

ENNISCRONE SEWERAGE SCHEME

This scheme involves the Design Build & Operation of a new Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sludge Satellite Station in Enniscrone (5000pe) and the operation of six additional Waste Water Treatment Plants (Ballysadare 4500pe, Aclare 750pe, Cloonacool 500pe, Dromore West 2500pe, Coolaney 2500pe and Easkey 450pe). The contractor, EPS Ltd., commenced works on site in June, 2007. The new treatment plant has now been commissioned and the Taking-Over Certificate which signifies the completion of the Design Build phase and the formal commencement of the 20 year O&M contract was issued in July 2008. The outturn project cost will be approximately €5m of which the local contribution from the Council will be €1.4m. The official opening of the plant was performed by Minister Michael Kitt on Monday 10th November, 2008.



Enniscrone Waste Water Treatment Plant. Photo by Steve Rogers.

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Rural Water Programme



TUBBERCURRY GRANGE AND STRANDHILL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS (DBO PROJECT)

These three schemes involving the provision of new wastewater treatment infrastructure for the towns of Tubbercurry (5000PE), Grange (2500PE) and Strandhill (4500PE) are to be advanced as a single Design, Build, Operate (DBO) project. The upgrade of Ballinacrow Waste Water Treatment Plant, funded from the Rural Water Small Schemes Programme, has also been added to this project to deliver further value for money. The tender process for this project is complete. The budget for the project is €10.8m and will take approximately eighteen months to complete. Advance works costing approximately €80,000 were carried out at the Tubbercurry Waste Water Treatment Plant during 2007.

LOUGH TALT WATER SUPPLY SCHEME

The Preliminary Report which assessed demands, sources, treatment options, storage and network improvements was completed in 2008 and submitted to the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government. The project as outlined in the Preliminary Report is proposed to be advanced in four phases; water treatment plant (12,500m³); intake works; network improvements; south Sligo interconnector. The 2008 cost estimate for completion of the entire scheme is €30.7m with Phase 1 only cost estimate at €7.5m. The estimated marginal cost for phase 1 only is €2.25m. It is proposed to commence the required statutory procedures and pending formal approval of the PR and the necessary finances, to advance Phase 1 to procurement and construction phases during 2009. A preferred site location was identified in the PR and planning and land acquisition procedures are being progressed.

MULLAGHMORE WATER SUPPLY SCHEME – STAGE 2

This scheme involves the provision of additional water storage capacity (new 468 m³ reservoir) and approx. 2km of associated pipeline infrastructure in the village of Mullaghmore. The scheme budget is €0.69m and the Council's contribution has been assessed at €90,000. Part 8 planning has been approved for the new reservoir. Construction of the rising main is completed. The new reservoir will be advanced subject to approval of necessary finances.

BALLYGAWLEY, MULLAGHMORE, BALLINACARROW & CLIFFONEY SEWERAGE SCHEMES

These four village schemes involving the provision of new wastewater treatment infrastructure and network improvements were progressed as a single project for the preparation of preliminary reports. Ballygawley and Mullaghmore have been approved under the Capital programme while Cliffoney and Ballinacarrow are approved as Service Land Initiative Schemes.

The Preliminary Report cost estimates for each scheme are as follows:- Ballinacarrow SS €3,336,723; Cliffoney SS €5,046,811; Ballygawley SS €3,592,121; Mullaghmore SS €9,468,590. Sligo County Council is currently reviewing the feasibility of Cliffoney and Ballinacarrow as Service Land Initiative's. The Preliminary Report's for Ballygawley and Mullaghmore will be submitted to the Department for approval.

BALLYMOTE & COLLOONEY SEWERAGE SCHEMES

This project involves the review and upgrade of existing sewerage schemes in Ballymote (3000PE) and Collooney (1400PE). The two schemes have been bundled into one project in order to deliver the best value for money. The project is currently in the planning phase and pending Department approval of the project brief it is anticipated that the Client's Representative will be appointed in 2009. Preliminary cost estimate for this scheme is €6m.

NORTH SLIGO REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY SCHEME – PHASE 2

This scheme involves the review and upgrade of existing water treatment facility in the townland of Ardnaglass (near Grange) and the associated water supply infrastructure in the North Sligo region. Pending Department approval of the project brief it is anticipated that the Client's Representative will be appointed in 2009. The preliminary indicative cost for the scheme is €4m.

SLIGO & ENVIRONS WATER SUPPLY – PHASE 3

This project involves the upsizing of the throughput capacity at the Foxes Den Water Treatment Works from 11,000m³/day to 16,500 m³/day. Reduction in Unaccounted for Water (UFW) levels achieved by the Water Conservation Project in the Sligo and Environs area has served immediate demand requirements for this scheme. Sligo County Council will monitor demand requirements for this scheme on an ongoing basis and progress the planning phase accordingly. The estimated cost of this upgrade is €4 m.



Foxes Den Water Treatment Works with Lough Gill.

**INFRASTRUCTURAL
SERVICES
DIRECTORATE**

Rural Water Programme

WATER CONSERVATION ALLOCATION

The County Sligo Water Conservation and Network Management Project is sub-divided into three stages;

- Stage 1: Implementation of Water Management Systems: Asset data collection, mapping (GIS), bulk and district metering, pressure control, telemetry and hydraulic modelling.
- Stage 2: Active Leakage Control: Location and repair of leaks.
- Stage 3: Mains Rehabilitation: The leakage control strategy implemented at Stages 1 and 2 above will allow for the identification of areas with persistent high leakage.

Stages 1 & 2 are substantially complete and have already achieved a substantial reduction in water production in the Sligo County & Borough areas. A detailed report on Stage 3 mains rehabilitation for the County & Borough area has been submitted to the Department for approval. Budget Estimate for Stage 3 is €54 m in 11 phases.

DEVELOPMENT LEVY SCHEMES

Development Levy Schemes are funded from development levies charged in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. This mechanism allows SCC to provide new infrastructure thereby facilitating development that would not be feasible otherwise. New wastewater treatment plants funded entirely from Development Levies were completed in Coolaney, Dromore West (see photos below), Carney, Gurteen and Rockfield. Upgrades in water supply infrastructure have also been carried out in Coolaney, Grange and Barnaderg. The costs associated with these works is approx 10m.



Coolaney Waste Water Treatment Plant.

SMALL SCHEMES PROGRAMME

Upgrading works at the existing wastewater treatment plants in Riverstown, Ballymote and Geevagh have been completed as well as the installation of approximately 2 km of trunk water main to service the Calry No.2 PWS scheme from the proposed new water treatment plant at Kilsellagh. Refurbishment works on the existing water treatment plant at Ballinascarrow are also complete.

Bunninadden Wastewater Treatment Works

This scheme involves the upgrade of the wastewater treatment works in the village of Bunninadden. The proposed scheme is jointly funded under the small schemes programme and a local developer financial contribution. It will be progressed in 2009 pending formal agreement between Sligo County Council and the developer and the necessary approvals.

Ballintogher Wastewater Treatment Works upgrading

This project involves the upgrade of the wastewater treatment works in the village of Ballintogher. The proposed scheme is jointly funded under the small schemes programme and a local developer financial contribution. The scheme will be progressed in 2009 pending formal agreement between Sligo County Council and the developer and the necessary approvals.

Provision of a Public Watermain in Carrowhubuck, Enniscrone

This scheme is located approximately 2.2 km north east of Enniscrone. The scheme will consist of the replacement of approximately 300 m of existing water main and the installation of 1300 m of new pipeline with a total of 15 service connections. The scheme will be taken off the public water supply from Lough Easkey WSS. This construction phase of this scheme will commence in 2009.



Dromore West Waste Water Treatment Plant.

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Rural Water Programme

Ballinafad Wastewater Treatment Works

This scheme involves the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant with a design capacity of 350PE in the village of Ballinafad. In order to deliver better value for money the scheme is bundled with the Tubbercurry/Grange/Strandhill Scheme. An interim plant upgrade has been put in place pending construction of the new plant. The tender price for the scheme is €0.90 m. Sligo County Council is awaiting the granting of loan approval from the Department to meet the Council's contribution to the cost of this DBO contract. Immediately on receipt of loan approval, Sligo County Council will be in a position to sign the contract and proceed to the construction phase.

Easkey Sewer Network Improvements

The scheme involves the construction of a new pumping station and associated gravity and rising mains are to be installed along the collection network. Land acquisition procedures and the Part 8 planning process the scheme will be progressed in 2009. The cost estimate for this scheme is €250,000.

Tubbercurry Sewer Network Improvements

Following completion of the CCTV survey and the Hydraulic Model Report, improvement works have been identified on the existing sewer network in Tubbercurry, including the upgrading of defective sewers and the rehabilitation of existing manholes. It is now proposed to advance sewer upgrading works on a phased basis and tender documents for phase 1 (upgrading 730m of 525mm diameter foul sewer) are substantially complete. The initial cost estimate of these works is €325,000.

Lough Easkey Water Treatment Plant Upgrading Works

Improvement works were carried out at the water treatment plant including replacement of filter media and lamella plates in the clarifiers. The cost of the works was €150,000. A review of the plant process is ongoing to determine if further improvement works are required.

North Sligo Water Treatment Plant Upgrading Works

Filter media and the lamella plates were replaced in the North Sligo Water Treatment plant. Additional storage capacity for wastewater settlement has been provided and the installation of a new sludge holding tank is substantially complete. Further upgrading works on monitoring and control systems is also being carried out. The cost of the works is €225,000.

Ballymote Wastewater Treatment Works Upgrading

This project involved the upgrading of the existing wastewater treatment plant to provide automated fine screening and flow measurement. These works are now completed. The project cost is €160,000.

Riverstown Wastewater Treatment Works Upgrading

This project involved the upgrading of the existing wastewater treatment plant in Riverstown to provide automated fine screening and flow measurement. Works are now complete. The cost of the works was €70,000.

Geevagh Wastewater Treatment Works Upgrading

This project involved the installation of a pump sump, together with duty standby pumps, control kiosk and dial out alarm system. The total cost of the works was €15,000.

Ballinascarrow Wastewater Treatment Works Upgrading

This scheme involves the refurbishment of the existing water treatment plant at Ballinascarrow as well as the provision of new fencing and railings. The cost of the works are €70,000.

Calry Pipeline

This scheme involved the installation of approximately 2km of trunk main to service the Calry No. 2 PWS scheme from the new water treatment plant at Kilsellagh. The new pipeline is operational following completion of the Glackbaun Group Water Supply Scheme booster pumping station in 2008. The cost of the works was €200,000.

Remedial Action List works

This involved the installation and commissioning of Chlorine monitors, turbidity monitors and chlorine booster stations on Lough Easkey WSS, Lough Gill WSS, North Sligo WSS, South Sligo WSS and Lough Talt WSS. The works are substantially complete on all schemes apart for Lough Talt where work is currently ongoing. The total cost of these works is approximately €325,000.

GROUP WATER SCHEMES

Glackbaun Group Water Scheme

Located approx. 4 km north east of Sligo, townlands include Drumkilsellagh, Kilsellagh, Lisduff, Doonally and Bellawillinbeg. The scheme consists of the provision of water main of approximately 3085m of 180mm, 14,400m of water main ranging from 180mm to 63mm, the construction of a booster pumping station and the construction of a 286m³ reservoir. There are 133 no. service connections on this scheme and the contract cost of the scheme is €1.35M. Works commenced on this scheme in October 2007 and all pipelines are completed. The scheme has been operational since November 2008.

Doo Group Water Scheme

This project constructs of the construction of a water supply scheme in the townlands of Cloonagashal, Doobeg, Ardrea, Knockminna and Doomore located approximately 5 km east of Ballymote. It consists of laying water mains of approximately 3500m of 100mm, 3350m of 75mm, 360m of 50mm water main, the provision of an inline booster and reserve pump inclusive of housing kiosk and 47 Domestic and 16 Agricultural connections on this scheme. Works commenced on this scheme in February 2008 and the scheme will be operational early in 2009. The contract Cost of this scheme is €355,000.

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Rural Water Programme

Mullaun Group Water Scheme

Mullaun is located approx. 1.5 km south west of Cloonacool village on the Masshill to Cloonacool road. The project consisted of 1030m of 50 mm water main and the provision of an inline booster and reserve pump inclusive of housing kiosk at a cost of €110,000.00. There is a total of 1 Domestic and 5 Agricultural connections on the scheme. The scheme will be supplied from the reservoir at Cloocacool, which is served by the Lough Talt Regional Water Supply. This scheme has been completed and will be operational early in 2009.

Coolaney Road Group Water Scheme

This scheme is located approximately 1.7 km to the west of Collooney Village. The scheme will consist of laying approximately 6400 m of 125 mm water main with a total of 63 service connections. The scheme will be connected to the public water supply at Collooney. This scheme is partly funded under small schemes programme. The cost for the provision of the scheme is approx €400,000. The construction phase of the scheme will commence early in 2009.

Keash Group Water Supply – Contract No. 2

This scheme is located approximately 7 km south east of Ballymote. The scheme consisted of 8,596m of 90 mm water main and 4,593 m of 125 mm water main and 125 no. service connections. The cost for the provision of the scheme is €877,000.00. The scheme is supplied from the existing source at Lough Labe. Work commenced on the scheme in June 2008. The scheme is operational since November 2008.



Site works at Keash GWS Site.

Ballintogher Stage III Group Water Scheme

The area to be serviced is located north east of Ballintogher and south west of Dromahair, along the R287. It includes the townlands of Castleore, Dromore, Crossboy and Gortlowan. There are a total of 26 no. domestic and 13 no. agricultural connections on this scheme. It is proposed to lay 3165 m of 75 mm water main and 270 m of 50 mm water main. It is proposed to connect this scheme to the existing public supply at the R287/R290 Junction. The cost for the provision of the scheme is approximately €420,000. It is anticipated that the construction phase of the scheme will commence in 2009.

TAKEOVER AND UPGRADING OF GROUP WATER SCHEMES

Monasteraden GWS – Takeover

Work is completed on the takeover of the Monasteraden Group Water Scheme. This project started in June 2006 and consisted of the laying of 4400 m of pipeline, the provision of a Booster Pumping Station, 5 no. Bulk Meters and a Pressure Reducing Valve. Water Meter Boxes have also been installed on all non-domestic and agricultural connections (149 in total) by P. Clarke & Sons Ltd.

Cuilmore GWS – Takover

This project started in October 2006 and consisted of the installation of meters on all non-domestic and agricultural connections (65 in total) by P. Clarke & Sons Ltd. In order to complete work on this scheme, a total of 450 m of pipeline needs to be installed an an additional 12 no. non-domestic meters required. The cost of this scheme was €40,000.

Watermain at Kilglass, Enniscrone

Located from Burke's Town Crossroads to Ballycummin Junction, approximately 5 km north east of Enniscrone, this scheme consists of 3,600 m of 100 mm, 350 m of 75 mm and 400 m of 50 mm water main along with 20 no. domestic connections and 6 no. agricultural connections. The source of this scheme is Fortland reservoir which is serviced by the Lough Easkey Regional Water Supply. The cost of this scheme is €270,000. All works have been completed on this scheme and the new main is operational.

Carranduff Group Water Scheme

The takeover of this scheme consisted of the installation of 13 no. water meter boxes on all non domestic and agricultural connections. All pipe lines within the scheme were found to be in good condition with no leakage and with adequate pressure to supply all the connections within the scheme. This scheme was approved for takeover at the Council meeting in February 2008.

Carns Group Water Scheme (Aclare)

No leaks were found on the network and the pipeline is in good condition. 8 no. non-domestic agricultural connections had water meter boxes installed. This scheme was approved for takeover at the Council meeting in February 2008.

Carrowlobaun Group Water Scheme

No leaks were found on the network and the pipeline is in good condition. 8 no. non-domestic agricultural connections had water meter boxes installed. This scheme was approved for takeover at the Council meeting held in February 2008.

Drinaghan, Knockarea

All pipelines within this scheme are in good working order and the takeover of this scheme consisted of the installation of 1 no. non-domestic water meter box and the repositioning of 1 no. stop-cock for access purposes. This scheme was formally taken over in February 2008 by Sligo County Council.

INFRASTRUCTURAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Rural Water Programme

Oldrock, Ballymote

All pipelines were found to be in good condition with adequate pressure supplying all connections. This scheme was formally taken over in February 2008 by Sligo County Council.

Carrentubber Group Water Scheme, Tubbercurry – Takeover

Located approximately 1.5 km north east of Tubbercurry, the takeover of this scheme will consist of the installation of 2,000 m of new 3 inch distribution main, 5 no. non-domestic meters and new valves throughout the scheme. Construction on this scheme is at an advanced stage and is scheduled for completion in April 2009.

Carrowcushcly Group Water Scheme – Takeover

Located approximately 4 km north of Ballymote, the takeover of this scheme will consist of the installation of 1,000 m of new 3 inch distribution main, 35 no. non-domestic meters and new valves throughout the scheme. Construction on this scheme is ongoing and is scheduled for completion in June 2009.

Lissaneena Group Water Scheme – Takeover

Located approximately 3.5 km south west of Collooney, the takeover of this scheme will consist of the replacement of 1,600 m of new 3 & 4 inch distribution main, 17 no. non-domestic meters and new valves throughout the scheme. Meter boxes installation is completed and the pipelines will be completed in 2009.

DESIGN BUILD OPERATE BUNDLE PROJECTS

The final account for the North West Design Build Operate (DBO) bundle was agreed and it has been formally submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government.

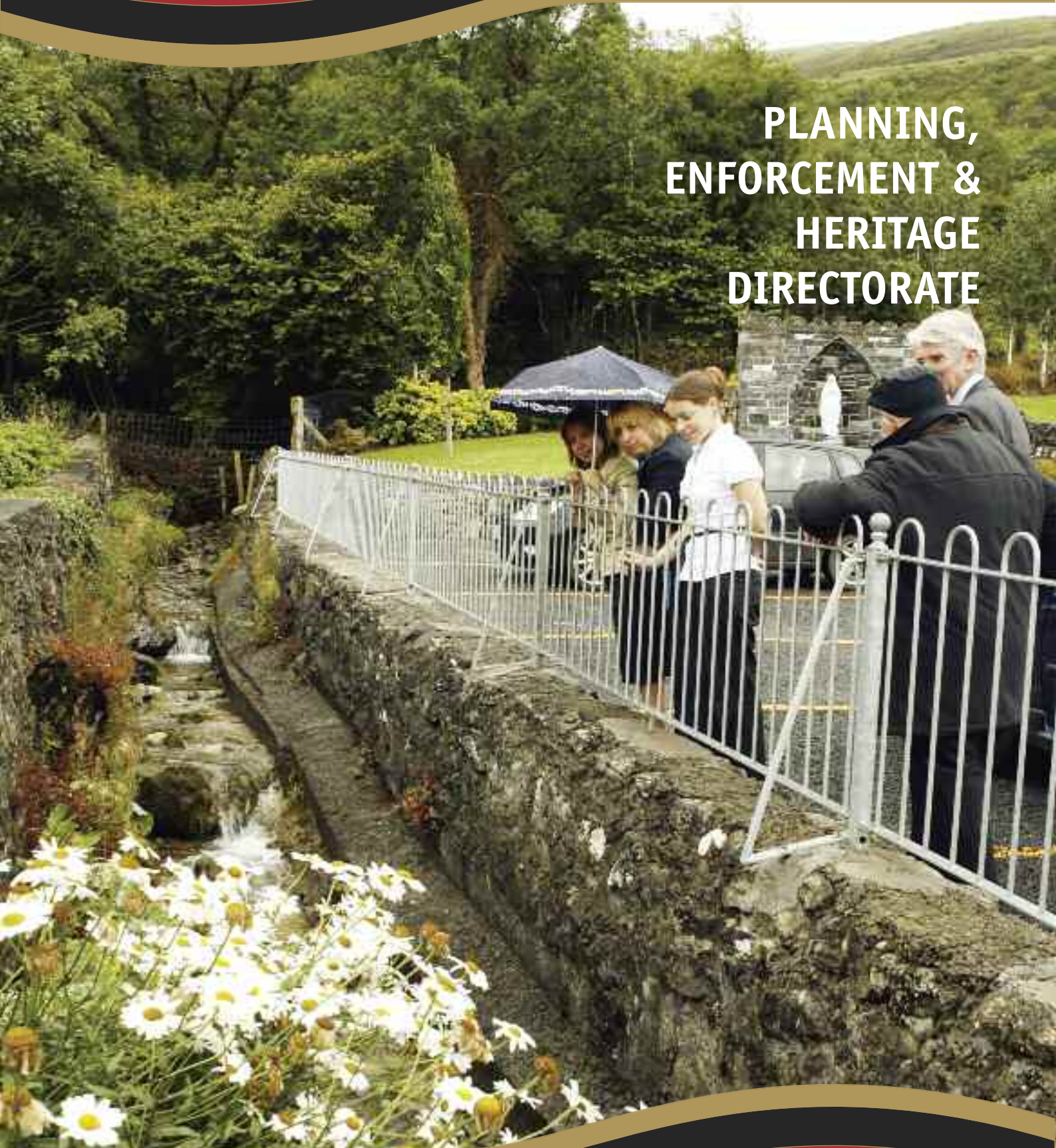
Taking over certificates have issued for all schemes.

Sligo County Council has prepared reports and acquired funding for the provision of crypto prevention equipment on the remaining 9 schemes which includes the South East and the North West bundles.

GROUP WATER CRITICAL MAINS REPLACEMENT/INSTALLATION OF METERS

All schemes have reached substantial completion. There are outstanding snags remaining on all 12 schemes. The final account has been submitted by contractor and the account will be completed in 2009.

PLANNING, ENFORCEMENT & HERITAGE DIRECTORATE



PLANNING, ENFORCEMENT & HERITAGE DIRECTORATE

Planning

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

During 2008 the planning department received 1,011 planning applications, representing a slight decrease (7%) on the previous year's intake but consistent with national trends with regard to the construction industry. Applications for single dwellings remain the most popular, amounting to just over 41% of all applications made.

The Development Management Team issued 849 decisions during the year with a refusal rate of 8.8%. Appeals have only been made to An Bord Pleanála in respect of 5% of all decisions made by Sligo County Council. Of those decisions appealed, An Bord Pleanála has reversed the Council's decision in only 22.5% of cases which is the lowest reversal rate of the 29 County Councils in the state.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

As in previous years, the Development Management Team is committed to continuously improving the standards of the customer service it provides to all the various stakeholders in the planning process. During 2008, Sligo County Council maintained its excellent record for efficiency when 79% of all planning decisions were determined in eight weeks or less. The low number of invalid applications (3.8%) continues to be amongst the best results of Planning Authorities nationally. The low invalidity rates can be attributed to the ongoing commitment of planning staff and the continuous engagement between the Development Management Team and the Planning Agents who submit the majority of all applications. The relatively low rate of refusals is in a large part due to the extensive level of pre-planning consultations which take place between County Council Planning Officials and prospective applicants, primarily in the form of face to face meetings held in County Hall or Teach Laighne, Tubbercurry. A total of 1,262 pre-planning meetings were held in 2008.

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING UNIT (DPU)

The Development Planning Unit is responsible for drafting planning and development policy for Sligo County and City, in consultation with the public, Members, officials, prescribed bodies and other stakeholders. The Development Planning team also carries out research, advises on development proposals, facilitates plan implementation and participates in a range of initiatives, at both local and regional level.

DRAFT SLIGO AND ENVIRONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010– 2016 (SEDP)

The Development Planning Unit progressed the review of the Sligo and Environs Development Plan by consulting with infrastructure and service providers and community groups and associations. This entailed sending out 204 letters to service providers and 292 letters to other groups and organisations.

Two public consultation meetings were held to inform the public and elicit views on the development plan review. These meetings took place in the Sligo Park Hotel and in the Clarion Hotel in January 2008.

Submissions were invited from the public and, as a result, 291 submissions were received by that closing date. The First Manager's Report on pre-draft submissions was issued to the Borough and County Council Members for their consideration. At subsequent meetings of both Local Authorities, the members directed the Manager to prepare a Draft Plan for Sligo and Environs.

Plan preparation work was undertaken by the Development Planning Unit in collaboration with the Borough Planning Section, the Architects' Department, the Heritage Officer, the Roads Section and the Parks Department. The DPU was assisted by specialist consultants in the

production of the Sligo City and County Joint Housing Strategy, Joint Retail Planning Strategy and the undertaking of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). All documentation associated with the Draft Plan was printed in-house.

Following the preparation of the Proposed Draft SEDP, the members of both Local Authorities amended and approved the Draft Plan for publication.

DRAFT NORTH FRINGE LOCAL AREA PLAN

In parallel with drafting the new SEDP, work progressed on the North Fringe Local Area Plan. A public consultation meeting was held on the 24th January 2008 and subsequent submissions were invited. The Draft North Fringe Plan was prepared by the National Building Agency (NBA) in close co-ordination with the Draft SEDP.

DRAFT QUAY QUARTER URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

The National Building Agency was engaged to undertake an urban design study of Sligo's Quay Quarter, which resulted in an Urban Design Framework (UDF) for this area of the town. The Draft Quay Quarter UDF was incorporated as an integral part of the Draft SEDP.

RECORD OF PROTECTED STRUCTURES (RPS) FOR THE SLIGO AND ENVIRONS AREA

Following the publication (in 2006) of the National Inventory for Architectural Heritage (NIAH) for Sligo, the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government recommended that all structures on this database be protected. Detailed work was subsequently done to identify which NIAH structures are not currently included on the RPS. A Proposed Draft RPS was eventually compiled and submitted to the Members of the Local Authorities. The approved Draft RPS included 346 structures of regional and national importance.

Specialist consultants were employed to assess the structures that warrant listing or otherwise on both the Sligo & Environs and County RPS. On completion of this exercise, additions/deletions will be formally proposed under Section 55 of the Planning & Development Act.

DRAFT CHARLESTOWN-BELLAGHY LOCAL AREA PLAN

Responding to the wishes of local residents and councillors in Bellaghy and Charlestown, the Development Planning Unit of Sligo County Council and the Forward Planning Section of Mayo County Council agreed to undertake the preparation of a joint Local Area Plan for the Charlestown-Bellaghy area, assisted by CAAS (planning and environmental consultants). Pre-draft consultation took place in the form of a public workshop held in Charlestown in October 2008. Work continued on the preparation of a Draft Plan.

SLIGO DOCKLANDS LOCAL AREA PLAN

In advance of commencing consultation on the proposed Docklands Local Area Plan, Sligo County Council decided to send a fact-finding mission to Bilbao in northern Spain, where recent waterside development has attracted worldwide attention. The trip took place in May and the delegation comprised of Council members and Planning staff. It was deemed a worthwhile mission, with valuable insights gained from meetings with local city planning and port officials.

Work on the Docklands Plan was progressed by identifying and compiling mailing lists of relevant stakeholders and resident groups. Zoning and general objectives for the area are to be set out in the adopted SEDP 2010-2016.

PLANNING, ENFORCEMENT & HERITAGE DIRECTORATE

Building Control & Enforcement

The principal activities of the enforcement section include: -

- Enforcement of planning control.
- Collection of development contributions and securing bonds.
- Monitoring/liasing with developers to ensure housing estates are completed to a satisfactory standard for taking in charge.
- Building Control.
- Dangerous Structures.
- Derelict Sites.

1. ENFORCEMENT OF PLANNING CONTROL

The sections role in this area involves investigating complaints from concerned citizens with regard to unauthorised development, random inspections of developments in progress, and dealing with prior to commencement conditions or conditions which have not been complied with.

Unauthorised development is developments works, which are not exempted, that are carried out on a site without the benefit of planning permission. In addition, it is considered to be unauthorised development where, a development is carried out, which is not in compliance with the terms (drawing, site layout, etc) or the conditions of the planning permission granted.

The Enforcement Section investigates all cases of unauthorised development, which comes to it's attention. It will conduct a site visit and examine the planning history of the site and may issue a warning letter to and/or serve an Enforcement notice on the Developer, as specified under the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Legal action is taken as necessary to deal with breaches of the Planning Acts and there are heavy penalties where a person is convicted in the Courts for carrying out unauthorised development.

The success of the Enforcement section can be demonstrated by the payment of €92,748.27 during 2008, in respect of application fees for planning permission to retain unauthorised developments.

Service Indicators

A total of 269 complaints in relation to unauthorised development were lodged with the Council during 2008. The Council carried out over 700 inspections, investigated 256 new complaints, issued 219 Warning Letters, served 126 Enforcement Notices, and initiated 35 prosecutions. During the same period 270 complaints were either resolved or dismissed.

Making a Complaint

Details of the unauthorised development may be submitted in writing or emailed to the Planning Enforcement Section. These details can also be advised by telephoning the section. Details should include the nature and extent of the development, the person (if known) who is carrying out the development and should include a site location map or accurate location details to facilitate inspection by the Council.

A complaints form is also available online to facilitate the making of a complaint. All complaints are treated confidentially.

2. COLLECTION OF DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS & SECURITY BONDS

A revised Development Contribution Scheme was adopted by the Council under Section 48 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 in November 2006. This scheme will provide the required funding to improve infrastructure throughout the County. In addition, special contributions have been levied in respect of waste – water schemes where specific exceptional costs not covered by the Scheme are incurred in Coolaney, Dromore West, Bunninadden, Carney, Gurteen, Castlebaldwin, Ballintogher and Rockfield.

A system has been put in place to ensure that development contributions which are levied are paid in accordance with the requirements of planning permissions granted. Where the contributions are not paid, appropriate action is taken up to and including legal action.

Bond

The Council imposes a condition on all housing schemes requiring that development works shall not commence until adequate security for the satisfactory completion of the development has been submitted to and accepted by the Planning Authority. Particular attention is given by this section to ensuring that adequate security is in place in respect of all housing developments. The security is only released when the development has been taken in charge of the Council. The phasing of the security is permitted subject to certain conditions.

3. TAKING ESTATES IN CHARGE

Monitoring of Housing Estates / Taking in Charge

A legal obligation has been placed on Local Authorities, under Section 180 of the Planning & Development Act 2000, to take in charge housing estates where certain conditions have been met. A revised policy in relation to taking in charge was adapted by the Council in 2008.

Many new housing estates have been built in the County over the last number of years. The activities of the Enforcement Section are geared towards ensuring that these estates are completed to a high standard and to allow the Council (where the developer or residents desire) to take them in charge. 15 estates were taken in charge during the year, with a further 26 on hand at the end of 2008.

Application Form

Any request to have a housing estate taken in charge by the Council must be accompanied by a completed application form, fee, appropriate certification and written confirmation of maintenance of open spaces. It is the policy of the Council to have carried out by an agent, on its behalf, a Closed Circuit TV survey on all main runs of foul and storm sewers, to ensure satisfactory standards of construction prior to taking any estates in charge.

PLANNING, ENFORCEMENT & HERITAGE DIRECTORATE

Building Control & Enforcement

4. BUILDING CONTROL

The Council is the building control authority for both Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council. The objective of the Building Control Section is to encourage good building practice, to ensure that buildings are constructed correctly and that access for the disabled and elderly is provided for in building plans. The Council is required, under inspection targets set nationally, to inspect between 12% and 15% of new works which were notified by way of the submission of a Commencement notice. In 2008 the Council inspected 126 Buildings (34%).

The Council continues to pay particular attention to compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations (which deals with access for people with disabilities), where a high level of compliance has been achieved.

In addition it is the policy of the Council when in receipt of a Commencement Notice for 2 or more houses or for commercial or industrial premises to require the developer, to submit drawings showing compliance with Part M – Section 11 (c) BC Act 1990. This has the effect of making both the developer and the architect / agent aware that Part M should be complied with both at the design and at the construction stages. Every effort is made to deal with breaches without seeking a resolution in the courts.

Commencement Notice

A commencement Notice is a Notice informing the Council of intent to carry out building works. It must be submitted to the Building Control Section of the council at least 14 days and not more than 28 days before the Commencement of any works which require compliance with The Building Regulations.

A commencement Notice is required for:

- The Erection of a Building.
- The Material Alteration or Extension of a Building.
- A Material Change of use of a Building to which the Building Regulation apply.
- A commencement Notice Form is available online or it can be obtained directly from the Building Control Section of Sligo County Council.

5. DANGEROUS STRUCTURES

This department has responsibility for dealing with any dangerous structure, which comes to our attention. One such structure was dealt with in 2008.

6. DERELICT SITES

This section continues to work with developers to secure the development of derelict sites. During the year, 52 inspections were carried out throughout the County. In addition, the Council served Notice of its intention to enter 11 sites in on the Derelict Sites Register. 6 sites were registered during the year.

An aerial photograph of a rugged coastline. The sea is on the left, with white-capped waves crashing against a dark, rocky shore. A narrow strip of land or beach runs along the coast. To the right, a steep, layered cliff face rises, showing distinct geological strata. The top of the cliff is covered in green grass. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The image is framed by decorative wavy borders in red, black, and gold at the top and bottom.

**COMMUNITY &
ENTERPRISE,
ARTS & ENVIRONMENT
DIRECTORATE**

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE, ARTS & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Environmental Services

The Environment Section is responsible for a wide range of services spanning three programme groups. The objectives outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan (2004-2009) are to:

- Provide a clean living environment for the citizens of Sligo.
- Promote the conservation of areas of natural environmental value.
- Protect and improve water and air quality in Sligo.
- Reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

During 2008, the focus was to continue to introduce and implement measures to achieve these corporate objectives.

PROGRAMME GROUP 5 – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- Waste Management
- Water Quality Management
- Pollution Control
- Beaches
- Water Safety
- Casual Trading
- Environmental Awareness
- Environmental Enforcement
- Litter Management
- Noise Pollution
- Air Pollution

PROGRAMME GROUP 7 – AGRICULTURE & EDUCATION

- Food Safety

PROGRAMME GROUP 8 – MISCELLANEOUS

- Control of Dogs
- Control of Horses

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The level of interest in waste minimisation and effective waste management has dramatically increased in recent years and diverting waste from landfill is one of the greatest waste management challenges facing our Country. The Connaught Waste Management Plan (2006-2011) re-emphasises the waste management targets to be achieved in order to comply with National and EU targets, namely: Recycle 48%, Thermally Treat 33% and Landfill 19% of our waste. 30% of Sligo's household waste was recycled in 2008 which is an increase in comparison to the amount recycled in 2007. However, in order to reach the ambitious target of 48% recycling of household waste, the 'third bin' for organic kitchen waste needs to be introduced to the collection system. It is anticipated to introduce the third bin in the last quarter of 2009 and to continue to work with waste collectors and others to increase the percentage of organic waste that is diverted from landfill.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Dry recyclable wastes are catered for at the two Recycling Centres which are located in Sligo town and Tubbercurry. The use of these facilities continues to grow and complement the separate kerbside collection of

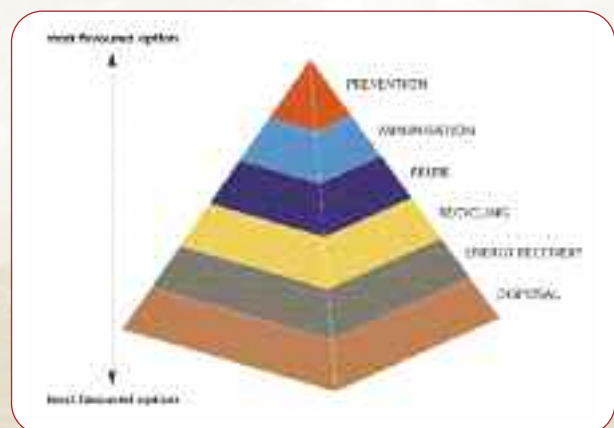
dry recyclable materials, which is available throughout Sligo. Adequate infrastructure is in place in County Sligo to cater for the quantities of dry municipal waste produced, and the challenge now is to maintain and increase their use by both domestic and commercial customers.

Glass is diverted from landfill via a network of 42 bottle banks located throughout Sligo town and County. A total of 1,377 tonnes of glass were recycled in Sligo in 2008, this is an increase of 268 tonnes in comparison to 2007's figure.

Organic kitchen waste makes up approximately 30% of all household waste generated. Home composting is a positive and simple option to deal with this waste stream. In 2008, the Environment Section continued to heavily promote the use of home composters and offer them for sale at a subsidised rate. Home composting and the introduction of the 'third bin' for the collection of separated organic kitchen waste will greatly increase the diversion of organic kitchen waste from landfill, thus increasing Sligo's recycling rates.

Sligo County Council completed the construction of a Green Waste Composting Facility at Ballisodare, Co. Sligo, in 2007. Green garden waste is a bulky waste fraction that should be diverted from landfill. This facility opened in June 2008 and is accepting green waste and selling peat free compost generated at the site.

Landfill is the least preferred option in dealing with waste, and is at the bottom of the EU waste hierarchy. However, landfill is required to deal with the waste that cannot be recycled, composted or thermally treated, which is estimated to be 19% of all waste generated in Connaught. A greater percentage of landfill capacity is required until the necessary infrastructure is put in place to recycle, compost and in particular thermally treat waste. The development of a North Connaught Landfill to deal with this interim waste, and to ultimately deal with the 19% of residual waste in 2013, continued to be discussed by all relevant Local Authorities in 2008.



ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

The Council's Environmental Awareness Officer actively promotes positive environmental action throughout County Sligo. The Environmental Awareness Officer works in tandem with schools, community groups and members of the public to encourage them to reduce, reuse and recycle waste.

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE, ARTS & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Environmental Services

In total 46 schools in County Sligo have achieved the Green Flag Award. 61 of Sligo's 63 National Schools are registered with the Green Schools Programme, 38 of which have been awarded the Green Flag. All 16 of Sligo's Secondary schools are registered in the Green Schools Programme, 6 of which have been awarded the Green Flag. 3 schools with Special Needs are registered in the Green Schools programme, 2 have achieved the Green Flag Award.

The Environment Section continues to support national environmental campaigns e.g. Green Christmas Campaign, National Tree Week, National Spring Clean, National Recycling Week, Race Against Waste etc. by organising local initiatives. In March 2008 1,000 sapling trees were distributed to community & voluntary groups and schools in County Sligo as part of the National Tree Week programme of events. Sligo County Council supported the communities as part of the National Spring Clean Campaign 2008.

The Anti-Litter Awareness Grant and Local Agenda 21 Environment Partnership Fund offers financial support to groups that wish to organize environmental projects. The Local Agenda 21 – Environment Partnership Fund promotes sustainable development by assisting small scale, non-profit environmental projects at local level. In 2008, 41 groups received funding under this grant scheme. €7,372 was granted from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, which must be matched by the local authority, bringing the total funding to €14,744.

Funding of €29,000 was awarded for public education and awareness initiatives on litter under the Anti-Litter Awareness Fund 2008. Sligo County Council received 24 applications for funding.

The Environment Awareness Officer uses the local media in the form of local newspaper and radio advertisements, press releases and interviews to promote the campaigns as they arise. The Sligo County Council website and newly installed podcast service also broadcast environmental news.

WASTE ENFORCEMENT

Since the Waste Management Act came into being in 1996, a large number of Waste Regulations have followed, covering a wide range of waste management activities. Proceeds from a number of initiatives at national level including the Plastic Bag Levy and the Landfill Levy are providing 100% funding for waste enforcement teams in Local Authorities across the country.

The main role of the enforcement section is to ensure that waste is properly managed in a way that avoids environmental pollution, increases diversion from landfill rates and does not allow for non compliant operators to have a competitive advantage over compliant operators. The areas that the officers worked on included waste facility and waste collection permits, waste presentation, WEEE recycling, waste movements (including exports), general complaints, illegal dumping, burning, farm plastics, end of life vehicles, historic landfill issues and general compliance with all waste regulations that are currently in force. Waste Enforcement also involves advising businesses and the general public, as well as other sections of the Local Authority about various aspects of waste management and the implications placed upon those affected by the introduction of new regulations. Over 1,874 waste management related complaints and issues were dealt with by the Waste Enforcement section in 2008.

One of Sligo County Council's waste management priorities in 2008 was the implementation of regulations governing end of life vehicles, these are vehicles that can not go back on the road again, and will be broken de-polluted and stripped for parts or baled for their metal content. They can be referred to as scrap vehicles or ELV's. These regulations were introduced to ensure that ELV's are dealt with in a manner that promotes the recovery of scrap vehicles at sites that have environmental protection measures in place and are authorised as treatment facilities. An aerial survey was carried out to identify sites where scrap vehicles were being stored in a manner that could result in environmental pollution, subsequent investigations and enforcement measures were carried out at these sites. There are now a number of these Authorised Treatment Facilities where members of the public can deposit their old cars free of charge. These facilities are processing vehicles from all over Connaught, and the processed material was exported from the County by ship and road. The exportation of this waste was subject to inspection and tracking during transport, both at road checkpoints and port inspections.

Another area which required attention was the issue of waste presentation, both from businesses and the domestic sector. There was an issue surrounding inappropriate presentation, coupled with the introduction of bye laws and the review and extension of routes. The work carried out in this area has resulted in an improved waste collection service for the County, and a greater volume of waste being collected and disposed of in an appropriate manner. This area will continue to require a significant investment of effort to ensure that services continue to improve and expand.

As well as carrying out inspections at various sites, a number of coordinated multi agency approaches to waste enforcement were employed. This included the carrying out, in conjunction with the Gardaí and other local authorities, of regular road check points relating to waste movements. This exercise also helped to increase public awareness of the waste enforcement section.

A number of CCTV systems have been installed at various sites, principally Bring Banks that had been adversely affected by illegal dumping. The Waste Enforcement team was involved in the monitoring of footage, and the issuing of fines to offenders, as well as the installation of the systems. Through this enforcement action and the employment of a dedicated Bring Bank maintenance person, the Bring Banks in Sligo are now in excellent condition, so much so that other Councils are looking at the techniques employed by Sligo, which have achieved substantial savings.

During the course of the year, concerns were raised about the ban on the Sale, Marketing and Distribution of Bituminous Fuels in the Borough area. This resulted in a program to ensure compliance, which included suppliers being contacted and informed of their ongoing responsibilities. Inspections of suppliers and premises involved are also planned for 2009.

The Waste Enforcement section will continue to work in all of the areas already outlined above, in addition to the new regulations that have been introduced since the start of 2008.

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE, ARTS & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Environmental Services

LITTER

The issue of litter continues to be a major challenge. In 2008 activity continued on the enforcement of the Litter Pollution Act, 1997 – 2003 as amended.

In 2008, over 178 on-the-spot fines were issued for offences ranging from sweet wrappers and illegal signage to 2 or less bags of refuse illegally dumped on public property. Non payment of fines result in legal action being taken by the Council and by the end of 2008 the Council initiated over 10 prosecutions.

In 2008 a zero tolerance approach continued to be taken in relation to littering at bring bank sites. With the purchase of CCTV cameras and installation of these at 9 bring bank sites in the County, it is expected that offenders will be more easily identified

Operation Clean Sweep continued in 2008. Under Section 6 of the Litter Pollution Act 1997-2003 as amended, occupiers of premises fronting onto the footway within the town limits are obliged to keep the area in front of their premises free of litter. Operation Clean Sweep has so far been introduced to 7 towns and villages in the County.

Litter Monitoring surveys were again carried out by Sligo County Council from March to October by the Litter Warden in towns and villages in the County. This survey is an environmental management tool that enables local authorities to tackle litter more effectively, by providing a framework for consistent and accurate self-assessment by local authorities – “if you can measure the litter issue, you can manage it”.

Finally, the Environmental Awareness Officer continued to highlight the problem of litter through various programs of work and methods of advertising including competitions, newspaper and radio advertisements, posters, displays, signage and the publication of leaflets. Through the Green School's programme a huge amount of awareness activity took place including school talks, litter competitions, discussions and debate.

WATER QUALITY

Water quality monitoring and management is governed by the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and provides for water management on the basis of River Basin Districts (RBDs). The WFD aims to provide a new, strengthened system for the protection and improvement of water resources and water-dependent ecosystems. The WFD required that our waters achieve at least good status and that none of our waters deteriorate by 2015.

County Sligo is involved in three River Basin Districts, the Western RBD (most of County Sligo is in this RBD), the Shannon RBD and the North Western International RBD. The overall objective of river basin projects is to establish an integrated monitoring and management system for all waters within a River Basin District, to develop a dynamic programme of management measures and to produce a River Basin Management Plan. The plan will identify the specific environmental objectives to be achieved by the end of 2015 and the programme of measures, which are the actions that will be taken to achieve outlined objectives. Sligo County Council is responsible for the implementation of the River Basin Management Plans and in 2008 the Section was involved in the consultation processes and made numerous submissions in relation to the draft River Basin Management Plans. The River Basin Management Plans will be published by the end of 2009.

In 2008 the Water Quality Management Section continued the monitoring, protection and improvement of water resources and enforcement work as outlined below.

Water Pollution

Enforcement of water pollution legislation is an important element in ensuring good water quality. In 2008 the Environment Section dealt with 138 complaints relating to water issues. Letters and enforcement notices were issued under the Water Pollution Acts, 1977 to 2007 where necessary.

Discharge Licences

Sligo County Council license discharges to waters and sewers in accordance with the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts, 1977 & 1990 and the associated Regulations.

25 premises are licensed to discharge to waters under Section 4 of the Local Government (Water Pollution) Act, 1977 & 1990 and 35 premises are licensed in the County to discharge to sewers under Section 16 of the Local Government Water Pollution Act, 1977 & 1990. Significant work was undertaken in 2008 in relation to regulating discharges to sewers under Section 16 in Sligo Borough, Strandhill, Enniscrone and Tubbercurry.

Discharges to waters and sewers were investigated throughout the County to ensure compliance with Water Pollution Regulations, with enforcement action taken where necessary.

Source Protection

Farm and septic tank inspections are routinely carried out, with follow up enforcement action taken where necessary. In 2008 draft Source Protection Plans were prepared for Lough Arrow, North Sligo and Lough Easkey, these Plans include risk assessments for Cryptosporidium.

In 2008 the Environmental Section worked with the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI), on the draft Groundwater Protection Scheme for County Sligo. It is envisaged that this scheme will be completed by the end of 2009.

Planning Applications

The Environment Section assesses and makes recommendations on all commercial and agricultural planning applications and domestic planning applications located in sensitive areas. In 2008 223 planning applications were assessed.

The Section was also involved in making a submission in relation to the draft Sligo and Environs Development Plan.

Site Suitability Assessments

In 2005 a panel of approved site assessors was set up in conjunction with the Environment Section. The Environment Section is responsible for the regulation of the approved panel and we continued to work closely with the panel to ensure a consistent approach to site assessment.

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Environmental Services

NOISE POLLUTION

The Section provides advice and information on residential and commercial noise under the Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992. In 2008 nine complaints were received in relation to noise nuisance.

AIR POLLUTION

Sligo enjoys excellent Air Quality, and is fortunate not to have heavy industry discharging to the atmosphere. Sligo County Council continued to enforce two Air Pollution Licences. In 2008 four complaints relating to Air Pollution or Odour were received (excluding complaints relating to the burning of waste).

ENVIRONMENTAL LABORATORY

Most of the monitoring programmes outlined below are carried out by Sligo County Council's laboratory staff in the Council's well equipped laboratory.

Drinking Water Quality

During 2008, an extensive programme of monitoring was carried out on 13 Public Water Supplies, 14 Private Group Water Schemes, and 22 Public Group Water Schemes throughout the County. In summary, approximately 6165 compliance tests were carried out on water supplies in County Sligo during 2008, with overall compliance with quality standards at 96.8%. Regular communication was maintained during 2008 with the Health Services Executive and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in relation to drinking water quality. Resources will need to be continually maintained in this area in order to meet our statutory obligations and in order to give the citizens of County Sligo full reassurance that the drinking water is being produced and tested to the highest standards.

Surface Water Abstractions

Public Water Supply abstraction points are monitored in accordance with the EC (Surface Water intended for the abstraction of drinking water) Regulations, 1989. This monitoring together with our catchment management programme helps to ensure that our drinking water sources achieve maximum protection.

Urban Waste Water Treatment Plants

The quality of final effluent from urban waste water treatment plants in the County is monitored to ensure compliance with standards set by the EC (Urban Wastewater Treatment) Regulations, 2001. During 2008, a total of 141 samples were taken and analysed from 25 UWW Treatment plants in County Sligo. Significant investment under the Water Services Investment Programme should help to address deficiencies at some of these plants.

Licensed Discharges

Sligo County Council licences discharges to waters and to sewers in accordance with the Local Government (Water Pollution) Acts, 1977 and 1990. A total of 71 final effluent discharge samples were taken in 2008 to check compliance with the quality standards set by each discharge licence.

Beaches

Mullaghmore beach retained its blue flag status for the 2008 bathing season, however Enniscrone and Rosses Point were not successful in retaining their flags, due to a small number of water quality samples not meeting the very stringent blue flag standards during the previous bathing season (Note: Blue flag awards are based on beach performance during the previous years bathing season). Dunmorran and Streedagh beaches were awarded the Green Coast Award for excellent water quality and responsible beach management. The Green Coast Award is similar to the Blue Flag, except that it is aimed at rural beaches which do not have the infrastructure required to compete for the Blue Flag award. Dunmorran and Streedagh are the first beaches in County Sligo to receive the Green Coast Award.

Sligo County Council continued its extensive bathing water quality monitoring programme at five bathing areas in County Sligo during the 2008 bathing season (mid May - End August). The bathing areas monitored included Rosses Point, Mullaghmore, Enniscrone, Streedagh and Dunmorran. All beaches showed 100% compliance with the mandatory bathing water standards (acceptable and safe bathing water quality). All beaches except Rosses Point met the stricter guide standards.

Rivers and Lakes

In 2008, monitoring of Sligo's rivers and lakes took place under the National Water Framework Directive Monitoring Programme. The existing monitoring obligations of the Council were integrated into this programme, with more focused monitoring in areas of poor water quality. This monitoring was carried out by the EPA on behalf of Sligo County Council. A total of 246 river samples were taken during 2008.

FOOD SAFETY

Sligo County Council enforces Food Safety Regulations in small slaughterhouses and small meat manufacturing plants under Service Contract to the FSAI. The Service Contract between Sligo County Council and the FSAI which is common to all Local Authorities was drawn up following negotiations between the City and County Managers Association, The FSAI and The Local Authority Veterinary Service. The current contract was adopted by the Council in 2006 and will be in place until 2010.

In 2008, the significant legislative changes introduced by the EU at the beginning of 2006 continued to be the main area of consideration. Work continued on adapting and implementing these regulations. An implementation group consisting of the Food Safety Authority, The Department of Agriculture, the Local Authority Veterinary Service and the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority met to discuss the specifics of the requirements and the need to introduce National Legislation to implement some of the new provisions. Sligo County Council continues to be represented on that group and also on a sub group drawing up National rules for Wild Game.

Funding for the service is provided by Central Government through the FSAI. While the 2008 allocation was sufficient to operate the service greater input is being sought by Local Authorities into how the Budget is allocated.

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Environmental Services

There are currently 2 abattoirs under the supervision of Sligo County Council. The supervision involves pre and post slaughter checks on all animals along with continuous monitoring of hygiene and welfare standards and BSE controls. Both Plants were approved under the new legislation in 2007 and are now operating under full export standard. One of the results of the new legislation was to remove the distinction between small throughput plants and export plants. Both operators have undertaken training in HACCP which is a food safety management system and have introduced HACCP plans in their premises. One Slaughter premises had an additional approval granted in late 2007 to slaughter farmed deer. Two Small Meat Manufacturing premises also come under Sligo County Council supervision.

Sligo was chosen as one of the Counties to participate in a project in the North West designed to promote and market meat produced by Small Abattoirs. This came about following discussions between the Local Authority Veterinary Service, LEADER and the Department of Community, Gaeltacht and Rural Affairs. Progress on this was held up in the second half of 2008 and it is still under review.

The dioxin crisis which developed in December 2008 generated significant extra work for a short period. Three of the 4 premises under supervision of Sligo County Council were affected and one had to recall significant amounts of product which had been supplied to it. Certification was sent with all replacement product for a period to assure consumers that the product was not affected by the recall.

The inspection of liquid milk producers now takes place at an agreed level for all Local Authorities.

ANIMAL WELFARE

The Control of Dogs Act and The Control of Horses Act are the main pieces of welfare legislation that the Council has responsibility for.

Implementation of the Control of Dogs Acts involves investigation and seizure of stray dogs and checks for dog licences. The number of dog licences issued in 2008 was 4,409. This has been the result of a lot of work on the ground by the warden. Considerable work has also been done in re-homing dogs where possible. A new section on the Council web site "Adopt a dog" is proving very useful in re-homing dogs. Pictures and a brief description are put on the web and the contact details for the shelter are also given.

An expected increase in the dog licence fee which hasn't changed in 10 years was delayed in 2008. This resulted in a loss on income to the Council as the fee taken by An Post was increased in March 2008 from €1.17 to €3.50.

Attention and resources were again focused in 2008 on breeds which are listed in the Control of Dogs Regulations 1998 and which are commonly called restricted breeds. This involved targeting owners of these breeds and working with the Housing section of both Local Authorities. As recent events in Britain have shown, these breeds can be potentially very dangerous if not kept under strict control. Of the 352 dogs handled

by the pound in 2008, 46 were restricted breeds and of these 28 were Pit Bulls/Pit Bull crosses. This focus will continue in 2009 both in the enforcement of existing regulations and the possible introduction of new bye laws if necessary.

The Warden carried out some patrols at a number of the beaches in the County following the introduction of Beach Bye-Laws in 2007. These included a provision to have dogs on a leash at all times.

The issue of stray horses continues to be monitored. Difficulties persist at some locations and seizures will be considered if the situation does not improve. Towards the end of 2008, an increase in complaints about Horse Welfare became apparent and seems to be linked to the economic downturn.

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Interagency Programmes:

1. Sligo County Development Board:
2. County Development Sub Committees:
 - a. Social Inclusion Measure Group.
 - b. Innovation /Job Creation Group.
 - c. Inter Agency Tourism
 - d. PEACE II Extension Programme
 - e. RAPID Programme
3. Sligo County Council – Joint Policing Committee
4. Play & Recreation
5. Junior Achievement
6. Tidy Towns 2008
7. Sligo Pride of Place Competition 2008
8. Community and Voluntary Grants Scheme, 2008.
9. Burial Grounds
10. Community Smoke Alarm Scheme
11. Sligo Volunteer Centre 2008
12. Sligo County Community and Voluntary Forum
13. Sligo Arts Service

SLIGO COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Sligo County Development Board (SCDB) brings together representatives from the Local Government and Local Development sectors, State Agencies operating at local level, and Social Partners, including the Community and Voluntary Sector. The purpose of the Board is to improve co-ordination amongst local service providers and to promote economic social and cultural development in County Sligo. Throughout 2008 the Board continued to work on delivering its key priorities as set out in its Action Plan for Economic, Social and Cultural Development for County Sligo 2006-2008.

Some of the activities of the CDB include:-

- addressing the nature and extent of poverty and social exclusion in County Sligo through research, publications, events and initiatives;
- building the capacity of the community sector to feed into policy making through the County Community Forum;
- promoting volunteerism and active citizenship through the Sligo Volunteer Centre and initiatives such as Sligo Comhairle na nÓg;
- promoting rural economic regeneration in South and West Sligo.
- progressing out the actions as set out in the Inter-agency Travellers Strategy 2007-2012 for better co-ordination of services for the Travelling Community;
- improved co-ordination of services to ethnic minority groups including migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers;

Many of these actions are monitored through various subcommittees of the County Development Board including Social Inclusion Measures Group and the Innovation Job Creation Working Group.

In October 2008, City & County Development Boards were requested by the Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government to undertake a review of progress and experiences to date and focus on developing a limited number of agreed priorities for the period mid 2009-2012. Sligo County Development Board commenced the process

with a series of review sessions with its members and sub committees to arrive at shared goals for the period 2009-2012. The Minister outlined the process which the review should take and requested Boards to pay particular attention to their core co-ordination role of local public service delivery and the need for sharing of resources to ensure efficiencies and value for money.

The County Development Board and its sub committees are facilitated by the Department of Community & Enterprise.

SOCIAL INCLUSION MEASURES GROUP (SIM GROUP).

The Social Inclusion Measures Group is a statutory sub-committee of the County Development Board. It provides a forum for co-ordinating the delivery of social inclusion activities in County Sligo and to identify and address any gaps and overlaps between agencies in the delivery of social inclusion work within the county.

Some of the main activities of the Group in 2008 include the work of some of its sub-committees:-

- i. Lone Parents Initiative (PEPPA Project).
- ii. Interagency Traveller Strategy Group.
- iii. Development of the Comhairle na nÓg & Sligo Youth Council.

LONE PARENTS INITIATIVE (PEPPA PROJECT)

Sligo County Development Boards Lone Parent Initiative was one year pilot programme, funded by the Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform in 2007. The Initiative was short listed as a finalist under the Chambers Excellence in Local Government Awards 2008 in the County Development Board Category.

The purpose of the Initiative was to provide intensive career path planning and to improve labour market participation of lone parents in the county. County Sligo VEC took the lead in implementing the Initiative and it supported over 100 people parenting alone through the provision of education, related to individual need.

An independent evaluation of the Initiative was completed and it received very positive feedback from its participants. Identified as a good example of Inter-agency working the success of the PEPPA Project has been attributed to:- the outreach aspect of the programme, provision of one to one mentoring, focus on skills development and empowerment of the participants.

During the course of the Pilot an Interagency Advisory Committee was put in place to oversee the project, its membership was as follows: County Sligo VEC, Sligo County Council, FÁS, Dept of Social and Family Affairs, IT Sligo, Family Resource Centres in Sligo, Tubbercurry, Ballymote and Easkey, Sligo County Childcare Committee, Sligo Leader Partnership Company, Sligo County Enterprise Board, ICTU and RAPID AIT.

On the cessation of the pilot initiative Lone Parent Groups were set up through Family Resource Centres in Easkey, Ballymote and Tubbercurry and in Springboard Family Support Project, Cranmore along with Sligo Northside CDP.

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INTERAGENCY TRAVELLER STRATEGY GROUP

The Interagency Traveller Strategy Group is responsible for monitoring progress on the implementation of the County Development Board's Interagency Traveller Strategy for Co Sligo 2007-2012. The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to enhance interagency co-operation in the delivery of service and supports to the Traveller Community. The Strategy focuses on a series of integrated actions under the following thematic areas: Accommodation, Health, Education Training & Employment, Childcare and Youth.

The Actions outlined in the Strategy are funded mainly through the resources of the participating Agencies and some actions involve the pooling together of resources of a number of agencies. The Group is convened by the Office of Community & Enterprise and chaired by the Director of Service, Community & Enterprise, Arts and the Environment.

COMHAIRLE NA NÓG

Comhairle na nÓg Shligigh is a County Sligo Development Board Project set up as part of the National Children's Strategy (2000). Comhairle na nÓg provides a forum for young people to discuss local and national issues of relevance to them. In 2008, the County Development Board was awarded an Enhanced Programme of Activities Grant of €15,000 by the Office of the Minister for Children to further develop the Comhairle na nÓg (Youth Council) in the County. The initiative involves a working partnership between Sligo County Council's Department of Community and Enterprise and County Sligo VEC. Following a tender process, Foroige won the contract to provide the support of a dedicated Youth Worker to the initiative. In developing the Comhairle na nÓg the objective is to create a model of best practice with emphasis being placed on increasing the participation of young people in the Comhairle na nÓg AGM and in particular the participation of harder to reach young people. It also focuses on developing democratic elections for the selection of young members onto Sligo Youth Council.

The County Development Board hosted the 7th Comhairle na nÓg AGM on the 9th December, 2008 at the Clarion Hotel Sligo. 77 young participants representing Sligo secondary schools and youth groups took part in the event to express their views on topics deemed important to them. Topics discussed on the day were Teenage Alcohol and Drugs and Youth Friendly Facilities in County Sligo. An election also took place to fill twelve places on Sligo Youth Council. The election procedure reflected the County Council Elections with representatives from each of the electoral area being voted on to the Council.



Comhairle na nÓg AGM 2008.



Delegates at Comhairle na nÓg consider the issues of the Day.

Sligo Youth Council is representative of the voice of young people in County Sligo, they meet monthly taking part in various projects and campaigns which they consider important to the youth of Sligo. The purpose of Comhairle na nÓg is to give young people a voice at a local level and to elect youth representatives to go forward to represent the views of their peers at the annual Dail na nÓg event organised under the auspices of the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs. Dail na nÓg is the National Youth Parliament of Ireland and gives young people the opportunity to represent, at a national level, the views of those under the voting age of 18.



Delegates at Comhairle na nÓg consider the issues of the Day.

INTER AGENCY TOURISM

In April 2007 Fáilte Ireland, under the NDP, announced funding opportunities for local authorities to develop a set of tourism facilities in the key product areas in 2008. The Fáilte Ireland grant of 75% was matched with 25% Local Authority funds. This represented a major opportunity to work in partnership with Fáilte Ireland to develop the infrastructure necessary for success in an ever more challenging tourism market. Two projects undertaken were:

Rosses Point Coastal Walking Trail Project (Phase 2)

Phase 2 extended and developed the existing location for the onset of increased visitor numbers through the enhancement of the area by improving its physical presentation through a series of improvements. The introduction of a dedicated looped pedestrian trail along the coastal headland has added significantly to the amenity of the area, for locals and visitors alike. Landscaping enhancements and trail information, seating and location map allied to the route also support the visitor experience.

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Enniscrone Coastal Walking Trail Project

The project consisted of construction of a combined looped pedestrian and cycle trail, extending beyond the existing linear waterfront path. The exclusive off-road experience complimented with landscaping, trail information and viewing platforms with dedicated seating, enriches the trail experience. The looped walk clearly illustrates the benefits of a partnership approach to the development of tourism enterprise initiatives which expand the visitor experience. Further development of the trail route is being investigated.

The projects adhere to the challenges outlined in the County Development Boards Integrated Strategy and in particular supports Priority 5 Tourism Development- focusing on developing quality tourism products appropriate to its economic, social and cultural characteristics. The projects also support a key objective of Sligo Local Authorities Corporate Plan 2004-2009 promoting Sligo as a tourism destination by facilitating development of tourism amenities in the county.



PEACE II EXTENSION PROGRAMME

Sligo County Council led Peace II Task Force (established as a sub committee of the County Development Board) has been involved in delivering the Peace Programme in Sligo over the past number of years. Under the Peace II extension Programme which ended in 2008 a total of €1,063,000 was granted to 26 projects throughout the county.

The main aim of the PEACE II programme is:

To promote reconciliation and help to build a more peaceful and stable society.

Funding focused on a wide variety of projects to encourage revitalization of areas, to support regeneration, development and enhancement of village and rural community facilities and to develop tourism related projects in order to reposition the area as a competitive tourism destination in the international market place.



Peace Play & Reconciliation Project.



Kilmactigue Peace Project.

The Sligo Peace and Reconciliation Partnership Committee hope to significantly contribute to the Peace Programme over the next number of years through the delivery of Priority 1.1 of the Peace III Programme.

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PEACE II EXTENSION	LOCALLY-BASED REGENERATION & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES	3.3 BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES & IMPROVING RURAL COMMUNITIES IN THE BORDER REGION	
REF. NO.	ORNAME	PROJECT TITLE	GRANTAWARDED
33468	Marketing Sligo Forum	County Sligo Tourism Initiative	€60,000
34116	Calry Development Association	Community walkway	€25,000
34154	North Connaught College	Community Health & Beauty Training Facility	€75,000
34275	Banada Development Agency Ltd	Banada Dev Agency, Extension & Enhancement of the John Hume Peace Gardens	€30,000
34276	Coolaney Development Company	Coolaney Playground	€67,500
34280	Kids' Own Publishing Partnership	Kids' Own Voices	€30,000
34339	Sligo Sport & Recreation Partnership	Building Communities Through Sport & Recreation	€90,000
34365	Skreen & Dromard Community Council	Striving for a Better Community	€30,000
34459	Sligo County Council	County Sligo Play & Recreation Development Project	€120,000
34461	Sligo LEADER Partnership Company Ltd	Tubbercurry Community Arts Development Project	€15,000
34687	Ox Mountain Development Co Ltd	Lough Talt Amenity Area Phase 3	€10,000
34725	Ballymote Community Enterprise	Ballymote Town Park Enhancement Project	€30,000
34729	Rosses Point tidy Towns Committee	The development of a tourism coastal walkway	€25,000
34818	MCR Community Development Committee	Refurbishment of MCR Community Centre	€27,000
34894	Mullaghmore Sailing Club - Disabled Sailing Group	Sailing for all at Mullaghmore Sailing Club	€43,700
34926	Kilmactigue Graveyard Committee	Kilmactigue Graveyard Restoration Project	€35,000
35008	Belt Torc Development Co Ltd	Moylough Community Resource Centre	€35,000
35054	Ballygawley Development Group	Ballygawley Village Enhancement Project	€26,000
35301	Geevagh Community Resource Group	Geevagh Community Centre	€30,000
35429	The Community of Lough Arrow Social Project	Keash Hall enhancement works	€40,000
35430	The Community of Lough Arrow Social Project	CLASP Community Transport	€30,000
35431	The Community of Lough Arrow Social Project	Ballinafad Village Amenity Area	€15,000
35514	The Ballinrillick Environmental Group	Marketing The Benwisikin Centre	€9,000
35611	Youthreach Sligo	East Ward Youth, Multimedia Learning Support & Meeting Facility	€90,000
35615	Blue Raincoat Theatre Company	Cairde Cross Border Arts & Disability Initiative	€34,800
35624	Comhaltas Ceoltoire Eireann	Morrison Memorial House, Teach Ceoil, Phase II	€40,000
			€1,063,000

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ABOUT RAPID

The RAPID Programme (Revitalising Areas through Planning Investment & Development) was launched in 2002 by the Minister for State for Local Development Eoin Ryan T.D. The RAPID Programme is now managed by Pobal under the auspice of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. There are now 46 areas in cities and towns around Ireland involved in the RAPID Programme, including the following parts of Sligo Town:

1. Cranmore Estate
2. Forthill Estate / Cartron Estate
3. Garavogue Villas / Doorly Park
4. St. Joseph's Terrace / St. Brigid's Place / Pilkington Terrace
5. Maugheraboy / Jinks Avenue / Tracey Avenue



RAPID Community Representatives Group.



The following Principles underpin the implementation of the programme:

- Community Participation and Local Ownership
- Promotion of Strategic Planning
- Co-ordination of provision of State Services
- Targeting of additional services, investment and facilities
- Building on Existing Structures
- Complementing existing initiatives

Current Projects in RAPID Areas

The following are examples of projects and initiatives prioritised under the RAPID Programme:

The RAPID Programme has three specific objectives:

1. To develop a specific integrated policy focus, across the Social Inclusion Measures identified in the National Development Plan, directed at the social groups who are excluded, especially where cumulative disadvantage is pervasive.
2. To tackle, in particular, the spatial concentration of unemployment, poverty and social exclusion within the 25 identified designated disadvantaged areas.
3. To stem the social and economic costs of social exclusion by developing a range of integrated measures such that the physical, social and community infrastructure of designated communities is developed to allow them harness the social capital and capacity necessary for economic and community development.

Development of Community CCTV Schemes

After the announcement from DJELR / Pobal regarding the success of the two Community-based CCTV applications, the RAPID Co-ordinator progressed the proposal for CCTV in Cranmore and Forthill through the following process:

- Formation of a Steering Group comprising Sligo Borough Council, Gardaí and Community Representatives to agree an action plan;
- Liaison with the Joint Policing Committee for their approval;
- Community consultation regarding the implementation of the CCTV projects in each community;
- A tendering process to satisfy Local Authority legislation and funders' requirements;
- Developing the technical specification of the cameras and equipment to be used.



Cranmore Pride and Peace Carnival.

Fifteen cameras will be placed in strategic positions in the two estates with Monitoring Rooms in City Hall and the Garda Station accessed by approved personnel only. It is expected that the CCTV system will act as an aid to the investigation and prosecution of criminal offences and breaches of tenancy, improving the quality of life for local residents.

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Illegal Money Lending Action Group

A sub group of the Community Safety Taskforce, the illegal money lending action group has been set up to examine the local problem of illegal money-lending since this has been identified as a key problem in RAPID areas.

Members of this group have met regularly since October 2008, to discuss the nature, extent and relief of the problems of illegal money-lending in Sligo Town. Representatives from Sligo Gardai, Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), Sligo Credit Union, Cranmore Regeneration Project, Focus Ireland, RAPID and Sligo Social Services want to raise awareness of this serious issue.

SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE (JPC)

Background

Joint Policing Committees were established under Section 36 of the Garda Síochána Act 2005. They offer local authority elected members, An Garda Síochána, members of the Public & members of the Oireachtas, the opportunity to make a significant impact on the quality of life within communities, by working together as a collective body. A Joint Policing Committee was established in the Sligo County Council Administrative area in December 2008.

Membership of the Sligo County Council Joint Policing Committees

- 13 local authority elected members with at least 2 from each local electoral area. Each political grouping on the County Council must be represented on the JPC. The Cathaoirleach is an ex-officio member.
- 5 members of the Oireachtas. Each political grouping represented by Oireachtas members should have representation among the five.
- The County Manager who is an ex-officio member and a person nominated by him.
- 2 Garda officers nominated by the Commissioner and accompanied by other Garda Officers as need arises.
- 3 persons representing the Community and Voluntary sector in the county.

Functions of the JPC

To serve as a forum for consultation, discussion and recommendation on matters affecting the policing of the Sligo County Council administrative area by:

1. Keeping under review:
 - levels & patterns of crime, disorder & anti-social behaviour in that area.
 - factors underlying & contributing to the levels of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in the area.

2. Advising the Local Authority and the Gardaí on how best they might perform their functions.
3. Arranging & hosting public meetings concerning matters affecting the policing of the Local Authority's administrative area.

JPCS are a facilitating body and a forum for discussion. They are intended as a means of building trust and confidence, bringing communities together in a way in which all participants feel comfortable. It is intended that the JPCs should engage with local community groups to the greatest degree possible as these groups are an important resource in tackling many of the issues addressed by the JPCs.

TIDY TOWNS 2008

Sligo County Council has worked in partnership with Tidy Towns groups providing advice and financial support for a long number of years. This relationship has led to:

- the steady increase in group marks
- helped in the physical enhancement of towns and villages
- promoted community development.

Sligo County Council has run a local Tidy Towns competition for the past number of years and judging for the 2008 competition took place in late May with the judging panel comprising of staff from various departments within the Council. There were 92 entries from across the county including entries from schools and local businesses.

In addition to the competition the Tidy Towns Committees who entered the National Tidy Towns Competition were eligible for the Tidy Towns Grants Scheme and newly formed committees received a start-up grant. In 2008 a special award was given to three committees in recognition of their continuous high achievement in the National Tidy Towns Competition: Ballintogher, Coolaney and Riverstown.



Cathaoirleach Jude Devins with 2008 Sligo Tidy Towns Committees.

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PLAY & RECREATION

“To make Sligo a child-friendly county in which opportunities for safe, challenging and varied play are accessible to every child.” this is the vision of the Sligo play policy developed in 2008 which focuses on children aged up to twelve years.



County Play Day.

Sligo County Council recognises the need to promote, prioritise and formalise the provision of play opportunities and aims to work in partnership with children and other agencies to achieve this end.

In the development of the policy advice was given by Sligo Play Advisory Forum. This forum consists of various departments within the local authority and external groups including the Community Forum, County Childcare Committee, the Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, Parents Organisations and others. The Chairs of both SPC 1 and SPC4 are also members of the Forum.



County Play Day.

In addition to playgrounds, the Sligo County Council provides and/or supports a number of other services and amenities that facilitate children's play and some structured activities. These include Community Centres and halls, football pitches, parks and libraries.



Cross Border Play Event.

A number of play events were held throughout the county during 2008 venues included Dunmoran beach, Ballymote, Grange, Streedagh beach, Tubbercurry and County Play Day which was held in Doorly Park. As part of a Peace II funded programme a number of cross-border play events were also organised by the Play & Recreation Development Officer.



Play Day Grange.



Play Day Streedagh.

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Play Day Tubbercurry.



Junior Achievement Awards 2008.

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT

In 2008, Sligo County Council became a sponsor of the Junior Achievement Ireland Programme. Junior Achievement is a voluntary organization which works with public and private organizations throughout Ireland offering schools a range of 17 enterprise and science programmes for students aged 5-18 years. The aims of Junior Achievement are to teach enterprise skills to young people and to target those at risk of early school leaving. Programmes are delivered in primary and secondary schools by trained volunteers from participating organizations with support from the teacher. Ten volunteers from both Sligo County Council and Sligo Borough Council participated in and delivered the programme during the year.



Junior Achievement 2008 - Class J Achievement.



Junior Achievement 2008 – Fire Department Volunteers.

SLIGO PRIDE OF PLACE COMPETITION 2008

The Pride of Place Competition, a Co-operation Ireland competition, recognises and celebrates the vital contributions that community groups make to society. The focus is on people coming together to shape, change and enjoy all that is good about their local area. It differs from other similar projects in that they specifically recognise the involvement of the local community in all aspects of rural and urban life including regeneration projects, promoting social inclusion and cohesion, the promotion of heritage and environmental awareness. Nominations are made by Local Authorities, who see at first hand what is being carried out at local level.

Sligo County Council in co-operation with Sligo Borough Council once again came together to reward and honour communities/areas engaged in ongoing or recently completed projects which foster awareness and enhancement in the locale, promote civic pride and encourage full community participation.

New provisions for the Pride of Place Competition 2008 saw the introduction of specific designated themes in the Single Issue Category. These included:

1. Services for the Elderly
2. Community Facility
3. Care of the Environment

Two groups went forward to represent Sligo at the All Island Pride of Place Awards:

- CLASP (Community of Lough Arrow Social Project) - Quality of Life project.
- The Teeling Community Centre, Collooney .

CLASP (Community of Lough Arrow Social Project) - Quality of Life project.

The project is involved in home care, the delivery of meals on wheels and the organisation and delivery of programmes to 5 Active Age clubs. Staff and volunteers deliver around 1000 meals to people in very rural locations every month. Approximately 250 community visits are undertaken each month and an average of 120 people attend the active age clubs each week. Through the Quality of Life project, CLASP identified that one of the main blocks to achieving a good quality of life for many community members is the lack of transport available to those without access to a car. Funding through the Rural Transport Initiative enabled CLASP to set up a dedicated community car scheme using voluntary drivers.

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The Teeling Community Centre, Collooney is a venue for sports, community development and childcare activities as well as a FÁS Training Centre for computer skills. It is also a facility which can be hired by those celebrating children's birthdays etc. or those hosting sporting tournaments such as International Boxing Matches. There are several exciting new developments including Tír na n-Óg Community Childcare Centre.



National Pride of Place Awards Ceremony 2008.

NATIONAL PRIDE OF PLACE AWARDS CEREMONY 2008

The Co-operation Ireland Pride of Place winners were announced on the 8th November at a gala awards ceremony in Cappoquin Community Centre, Cappoquin, Co. Waterford.

Although there were no overall prizes won by those groups representing Sligo the Teeling Community Centre was shortlisted in its category.

Community Smoke Alarm Scheme

The Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government allocated funding to Local Authorities in 2008 for the provision of smoke alarms to vulnerable households.

The objective of the Community Smoke Alarm Scheme was to target vulnerable households (non Local Authority housing) which might not be captured by other funding measures already available.

Sligo County Council with the assistance of the community and voluntary sector identified vulnerable households which were in need of smoke alarms and arranged for the supply of two free 10 year self contained smoke alarms per household. A total of 250 households benefited from this scheme. Sligo County Council acknowledges the support and assistance given by the community & voluntary sector in identifying the households and in the installation of the alarms. This scheme would not have succeeded were it not for their assistance.

Sligo Volunteer Centre

Sligo Volunteer Centre is an information & referral service for voluntary activity in County Sligo. They offer advice to people who wish to volunteer and also offer support to Not For Profit organisations who wish to involve volunteers.

2008 continued to be a year of growth and expansion for Sligo Volunteer Centre.

In July 2008, the Centre recruited another staff member to the role of Outreach & Development Officer with the Centre. This role complements the work that is happening with potential volunteers by offering dedicated support to Community & Voluntary organisations.

As is demonstrated in our figures, we continue to attract people to volunteer who have not previously been involved in volunteering. We see this as an important element of what we have to offer to the general public and indeed the sector as a whole. If we can continue to attract new people to volunteer it secures the future of participation and active citizenship.

In these changing and indeed challenging economic times, we continue to attract a high caliber of volunteer who have not only time, but a high level of skills to offer to Community & Voluntary organisations in County Sligo. Through the year ahead, we see an important role for the centre in harnessing & directing the skills and commitment of such volunteers who through circumstances have found themselves unemployed or underemployed.

Staff:

The staff & their roles within the centre are as follows;

Ms. Ciara Herity, Manager,

Ms. Alison Gately, Placement Officer (Part time post),

Ms. Paula Naughton, Outreach & Development Officer (Part time post started July 2008.



Staff of Sligo Volunteer Centre and Tommy Fleming pictured at Branching Out to Volunteer Event in Tubbercurry. From Left to Right: Ms. Alison Gately, Placement Officer; Ms. Ciara Herity, Manager; Mr. Tommy Fleming, Guest Speaker & Ms. Paula Naughton, Outreach & Development Officer.

2008 FACTS & FIGURES

- 211 volunteers registered with our service and were offered the support of our Placement Officer and other staff members.
- 65% of those volunteers who registered in 2008 had never previously volunteered
- 28 Community & Voluntary Organisations registered with our service. Between these and previously registered organisations 115 volunteer vacancies were registered.
- From January 2008 to the end of December 2008 Sligo Volunteer Centre made 145 placements within a variety of Community & Voluntary Groups. In relation to the total numbers of volunteers who registered in 2008, the placement rate was 69%.
- All placements made in 2008 generated 4,717 voluntary hours to local groups.

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PILOT PROGRAMMES

On occasion Sligo Volunteer Centre takes the lead on programmes to meet a specific area of need or to promote volunteering to a particular sector. In these cases we may be the main lead or support the appropriate Community & Voluntary Group in getting the project off the ground. One such programme was the Cross Border Activity Day in March 2008.

Cross Border Activity Day March 2008

Sligo Volunteer Centre teamed up with our colleagues in Fermanagh Volunteer Centre on a cross border activity day in March 2008.

The day involved young people with learning disabilities from the Positive Futures Group in Fermanagh and their volunteer mentors as well as young people with special needs from Sligo and their local volunteer mentors recruited by Sligo Volunteer Centre. The group met in St. Anne's Youth and Community Centre. The activity for the day was to paint their own pottery mug or plate with their own personal design and take it home with them. This activity was done through Rula Bula-Paint your own pottery studio at JFK Parade, Sligo. Each individual created their own masterpiece and will have something to remember the day by.



Lisa Moore & Emer McNulty taking part in the cross border activity day.



James from the Positive Futures group in Fermanagh with his finished art work.

Lunch followed the activity and it was fantastic to see the interaction between the participants from Sligo and from Fermanagh.

The activity was run in response to a need for young people with special needs to have a peer group to socialise with. This is a great example of partnership working and the promotion of active citizenship in local communities as well as in a cross border realm

Sligo 4Uth

Sligo Volunteer Centre were involved in the organising of a promotion event for youth aged 15-25. The event was called Sligo 4Uth and its aim was to bring a mix of information and activities on a range of topics including youth groups; volunteering; sport; community involvement; education & recreational opportunities to young people. Sligo Volunteer Centre were involved in organising the event along with a number of local agencies including Comhairle na nÓg, County Sligo VEC, Cranmore

Regeneration Project, Foróige, Gaisce The Presidents Award; North Connaught Youth & Community Services; Scouting Ireland; Sligo County Council; Sligo LEADER Partnership & Sligo Sport and Recreational Partnership. Sligo Volunteer Centre hosted an interactive information stand at the event where young people had the opportunity to take part in a quiz about Sligo Volunteer Centre and to ask questions about volunteering. Sligo Volunteer Centre was also involved in sourcing a team of volunteers to assist with stewarding the event on the day.

GIVE IT A SWIRL DAY – THE NATIONAL DAY OF VOLUNTEERING 2008

Give it a Swirl Day is the national day of volunteering lead by Volunteer Centres Ireland and its member centres. 2008 was the second year of the event. Sligo Volunteer Centre along with the local communities spearheaded 5 projects for Give it a Swirl Day 2008. These projects were wide ranging and included coastal research; village tidy ups and various beauty and therapy events. In total 82 individuals and 4 corporate groups got involved and 375+ volunteer hours were generated.



Coastal Research - young volunteers turn researchers for the day

On Friday 26th September 1st, 2nd & 3rd class in St. Patrick's N.S., Maugerow took part in Give it a Swirl Day as coastal research volunteers. The pupils took part in an educational workshop with Dr. Sarah Varian from Marine Dimensions to discover and learn about what they may find at the seashore. Then they headed to the seashore with clipboards in tow! Their finds were logged on the Marine Dimensions website and will contribute to their research on the movements of marine life around the Irish coast.



Children from St. Patrick's National School, Maugerow who got involved in Give it a Swirl Day 2009.

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Clean up Collooney Day

25 volunteers took part in Give it a Swirl Day with Collooney Tidy Towns. Marian Harkin, MEP also came along on the day to see the volunteers in action. She presented them with certificates to acknowledge their participation in the event. The work that was carried out included litter picking & flower planting. The aluminium bridge on the approach to the town was power washed and on the following day the Kiernan Avenue residents painted the wall by the boy's school all contributing to the Collooney makeover.



Above: Group of Give it a Swirl Day volunteers pictured with Marian Harkin MEP. Below: Volunteers getting stuck into the tasks at hand.



Positive Ageing Week is a week of events organised by the Sligo LEADER Partnership and other agencies to focus on the positive aspects of ageing and to promote services available to older people. Independent therapists and therapists from the Wellness Centre in Sligo participated providing holistic treatments from reflexology and massage to colour therapy to older people from around the county. Sligo Volunteer Centre also held a stand at the event to give information to older people who wanted to volunteer and to older people who were already running community groups and needed additional volunteers to provide support for their activities.



Member of local active age group receives treatment from a North Connaught College Beauty student.

Irish Cancer Society - Pink Ribbon Campaign

Sligo Volunteer Centre approached many local workplaces to get involved in the Pink Ribbon Campaign. Four work places took a box of merchandise to sell in aid of the Irish cancer society's breast cancer campaign. They included a variety of Sligo County Council offices; Sligo Borough Council; HSE West & FAS. A total of €580 was raised by these organisations for the campaign.

Rural Beauty Day

Sligo Volunteer Centre approached North Connaught College, Tubbercurry to take part as volunteers in Give it a Swirl Day 2008. Twelve beauty student volunteers from the college gave up their time to provide a day of beauty treatments for clients from active age groups across County Sligo. The HSE Health Promotion Unit was involved in sourcing the worthy recipients from Active Age Groups. Volunteers from the Beauty Therapy and Tourism courses helped to run the day which benefited Active Age Group members from three active age groups.

The active age group members became clients for the day and received free treatments including hand massage, nail painting, mini facial and plenty of advice on beauty in general.

It is hoped that North Connaught College students will continue to volunteer and to link with the HSE in the future.



People from a range of active age groups availing of the therapies offered by volunteers.

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International Volunteer Day 5th December 2008

For International Volunteer Day 2008, Sligo Volunteer Centre decided to encourage people to "Give your Time in 2009". The concept was to get out and talk to people about their options to volunteer. Information stands were held in Sligo County Library and Quayside Shopping Centre. Staff and volunteers were involved in manning the stands on the day.



Ms. Alison Gately & Mr. Frank Goodwin, volunteer encouraging people to "Give Your Time in 2009" on International Volunteer Day 2008.

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE, ARTS & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Sligo Arts Service

Sligo Arts Service continues to develop the arts in County Sligo so that the distinctive contribution of the arts to people's lives is fostered. As a department of Sligo County Council, working in partnership with Sligo Borough Council, The Arts Council of Ireland, and key stakeholders locally, regionally and nationally, we programme and support a range of activities from theatre to music, literature to dance, film to festival and photography to carnival. Each year we invest public money to create these high-quality artistic experiences that enrich people's lives.

ARTS PARTNERSHIPS

Our Arts Development Partnerships initiated in the Space For Art Sligo Arts Plan 2007-2012 aim to develop the creative thinking skills of artists of all disciplines, supporting long-term projects between voluntary groups, educational institutions and creative professionals in the county. In 2008, artists received training through the contexts of Arts+Health and Arts in Education with long-term programmes established for Live Music in the Classroom, Primary Colours and the Arts Programme for Older People.

For the fourth year in succession Sligo Arts Service worked with Sligo Art Gallery to develop a successful Visual Arts Awareness Programme and this was redeveloped as Primary Colours in 2008. The programme incorporates an annual curated exhibition in Sligo Art Gallery for young people and an artist-led participative programme in the gallery and six primary schools, nine artists and almost 180 pupils.

The Blue Raincoat Theatre Company undertook a programme of development initiatives with a group of 24 young people in Tubbercurry. Under the artistic directorship of Kelly Hughes, the group's performance at the opening of the All Ireland One Act Drama finals was a huge success, duly described by the adjudicator as a 'stunning piece of theatre'.

SLIGO MUSIC EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

Phase two of the Sligo Music Education Partnership resulted in the commencement of Phase 2 of Live Music in the Classroom and the delivery of a creative music curriculum. The partnership focuses on interactions between musicians, teachers and pupils in primary schools in Sligo and supports ongoing learning and knowledge sharing. This programme is now active in 19 schools around the country and involves over 20 musicians and almost 850 students directly.



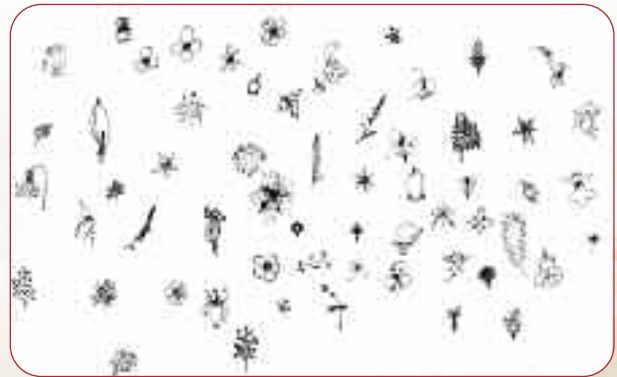
Stian Carstensen Accordion & Banjo Player from Norway (Vogler Spring Festival 2008).

Another music development partnership was with the Model Niland Gallery and together we commissioned research and recommendations on three music festivals currently in operation in Sligo: Sligo New Music Festival, Sligo Festival of Baroque Music and the Vogler Spring Festival. The report findings and proposals will be considered in 2009 in order to guide the development of these festivals and the development of music in Sligo more broadly.

Sligo Arts Service invests in local and voluntary run music promotion organisations that bring quality and variety to the music scene in Sligo. Con Brio run the high calibre Sligo Music Series and brought the London Irish Camerata and other classical highlights to local audiences. Sligo Jazz Project hosted the annual Jazz festival August and brought top international jazz professionals to tutor and perform memorable jazz shows. The associated ongoing jazz events in Sligo have created a wealth of new opportunities for emerging jazz artists to perform in public.

PUBLIC ART

Sligo's Public Art strategy aims to secure the highest levels of creativity and innovation in commissioning artists and to ensure integration by placing it within the planning and development process. Since 2000, 17 commissions have been completed and a further 5 are in progress. In 2006 Christine Mackey was commissioned by Sligo Borough Council to explore the landscape and history of Doorly Park, the Garavogue River and its environs from an artist's perspective. Meticulous research has led to a record of an area that is an invaluable resource for the city. RIVERwork(s) is presented as a unique anthology of this place both here and now and times past in the form of an artist's book (available from Sligo Arts Service) and an exhibition which took place in Sligo Art Gallery in June and July 2008.



Per Cent for Art Commission by Christine Mackey "Head Study".

Living Vestiges, cast bronze plant forms created by artist Elizabeth Caffrey, are the result of a commission by the National Roads Authority and Sligo Local Authorities and funded by the Per Cent for Art Scheme. The sculptural artworks installed in 2008 are placed on Sligo's old limestone walls and vernacular structures in the vicinity of the Inner Relief Road.

A limestone memorial sculpture by artists Jackie McKenna & Seamus Dunbar was unveiled at the Boathouse Quay, Doorly Park to commemorate the lives of soldiers from the Sligo environs who gave their lives in the service of peace with the United Nations. The commissioner was facilitated in this commission by the Public Art Officer of Sligo County Council who project managed the commission on behalf of the Irish Defence Forces.

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DIRECTORATE**

Sligo Arts Service

GRANTS & BURSARIES

The members of Sligo County Council awarded arts grants totalling €86,000 in 2008. Proposals were invited from artists, arts organisations, community and voluntary groups seeking funding to support their arts event. Bursaries support artists of all disciplines wishing to work independently on an arts project or develop their skills through training.



Arts Grants 2008 – Art at the Rally “Sunshine” by artist Ciara Layden.

The funding schemes allow the Council to identify arts activities taking place in the county and provide opportunities to establish new partnerships and develop projects with local communities. Of the many highlights that emerged in 2008, the Tracey Avenue Walkway Street Art project by three young art students was professionally striking enough to catch the attention of the media and be broadcast on the national news. Another highlight was the 100 strong children’s choir, Harmony for Sligo, who gave an outstanding performance at the opening of the International Barbershop Convention hosted in Sligo. It certainly was a showcase of the young musical talent in the county.



Street Art at Treacy Avenue.

The recipient of the inaugural Fred Conlon 3 Month Residential Studio Bursary award in Easkey, west County Sligo was visual artist Patricia Curran Mulligan. The John O’Leary Fine Art Graduate Award was introduced in 2008 at the opening of the annual Degree Show Exhibition in the Institute of Technology, Sligo. Tessa Marsden won the

award which supports a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art student in IT Sligo who has shown promise of artistic excellence in the visual art field and it is delivered in partnership with the Sligo Art Gallery and the Fine Art Department, Institute of Technology Sligo (IT Sligo).



Studio Bursary for Artist Cléa Van der Grijn.

Sligo has a strong tradition of hosting annual feisanna and festivals, particularly traditional music weekends, summer-schools and festivals such as the Sligo International Choral Festival, Cairde Summer Festival and Sligo Live that host spectacular world class events for all the family to enjoy. Funding from Sligo County Council grants scheme supports many of these events that have grown to become regular fixtures on the festivals and events calendar.

In 2008, the members of Sligo County Council awarded two special grants to the International Barbershop Convention and to the Western Drama Festival who both hosted major events in Sligo during the year. Annual grants to the main professional arts organisations in Sligo enable the Model Gallery, The Blue Raincoat Theatre Company and the Hawk’s Well Theatre to present their own programmes of art and culture to the widest possible audience.

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Sligo Arts Service

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The May Bank Holiday weekend featured the ninth Vogler Spring Festival. Once again the festival programme was a fantastic mixture of the best of chamber music by accomplished Irish and international performers, attracting large numbers of local and visiting music enthusiasts.



Bealtaine Festival Intergenerational Dimension 2008 Magic Me event in Ballymote.

For the ninth consecutive year, Sligo Arts Service, in partnership with the HSE and other relevant agencies, offered opportunities for older people to access and enjoy the arts through an arts workshop programme, special project commissions and artist residencies in the lead up to the annual Bealtaine Festival during the month of May. Sligo's newest visual art space, the Atrium Gallery in Nazareth House, hosted the first Bealtaine Artist-in-Residence Exhibition throughout the month.

YOUTH

The arts have an extraordinary power to deepen, broaden and transform the lives of children and young people. To this end, Sligo Arts Service invests in providing opportunities for children and young people to participate in arts and creativity. The first Sligo Youth Fair held in October was an event aimed to promote opportunities for young people to get involved in activities in their communities. A range of local organisations were involved and Sligo Arts Service promoted drama, music and visual art opportunities for the 15 – 21 year olds.



Sligo Youth Fair October 2008: Make Your Own DVD Workshops with artist Andy Parsons.

County Sligo Youth Theatre now operates as an independent company. Sligo Local Authorities allocated increased funding to secure a full-time Director for the development of the organisation –Jean Marie Perinetti was appointed in 2008. A key area of focus of engaging a director is to expand the Youth Theatre beyond Sligo Town by establishing branches around the county. The Youth Theatre presented a very successful production of *At the Black Pigs Dyke* at The Factory Performance Space in March by both the junior and senior members combined. Their newly renovated space 'The Fridge' is located on the grounds of the Factory Performance Space where workshops take place every weekend. Significantly, Sligo Youth Theatre collaborated in the Omagh Sligo Joint Cultural Events Project 2007-2008 during which time it assisted Omagh District Council in the establishment of Omagh Youth Theatre.



County Sligo Youth Theatre Rehearsals 2008.

FILM

Cinema North West, the mobile cinema continued to roll out its boutique cinema screenings to Grange and Tubbercurry bringing Irish releases such as *32A*, by award winning local director Marian Quinn as well as foreign language films and English language independents. The cinema is a partnership developed between the board of Cinema North West and funders Sligo County Council and Leitrim County Council. The mobile cinema played host to a range of suitable films for secondary school students as part of the Model Arts & Niland Gallery Education Programme.

The full length feature film, 'Occi vs The World', written and directed by Conor McDermottroe was due to start filming in September 2008 on location in Sligo. Sligo Arts Service assisted the crew who were on location for almost 6 weeks and used various locations during this period.

COMMUNITY & ENTERPRISE, ARTS & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

Sligo Arts Service

LITERATURE

Sligo Arts Service and the Sligo Library Services partnered in delivering a Literature Festival for Sligo's readers and writers in March 2008. The two-day festival marked the completion of Sligo's first Writer-in-Residence programme by author and playwright Niall Williams. Readings, workshops and associated events took place in libraries and other venues in Sligo town and county.



All Ireland Poetry Day Sligo – L-R Leland Bardwell, Eva Bourke, Mary Branley, Steve Wickham. Photo James Connolly.

Continuing the literary theme, Sligo participated in the inaugural All Ireland Poetry Day in October to mark Poetry Ireland's 30th birthday. The audience was treated to readings by Sligo's esteemed poet, Leland Bardwell together with Eva Bourke and Mary Branley. A special feature of the evening was the poets' collaboration with musician Steve Wickham.

Sligo Arts Department is part of a wider national network of Local Authority Arts Offices and is an important source of information and advice on a wide range of arts and cultural issues and topics both locally and nationally. For more information log onto www.sligoarts.ie or sign up for the free monthly Sligoarts E-Bulletin.



Young at Heart Active Age Group with their Benbulbin Pottery Figures.

Details of Conferences 2008

DATE	DETAILS OF ALL CONFERENCES APPROVED FOR ATTENDANCE BY COUNCILLORS IN 2008
9/10 Jan. 08	Cross Border Conference, Letterkenny
17-Jan. 08	Positive Farmers Conference
30/31 Jan. 08	ECO Tourism Conference, Fermanagh
7/8 Feb. 08	Mid Regional Authority Planning for Renewable Energy, Limerick
14 Feb. 08	Rural Men & Social Exclusion, Cavan
15/16 Feb. 08	A.M.A.I. Conference, Trim
21 - 23 Feb. 08	Ireland's Newest Emigrants, Letterkenny
22/23 Feb. 08	Suicide Prevention - A call to action, Dublin
29 Feb - 2 March 08	Columcille Winter School, Letterkenny
6 - 8 March, 08	A.C.C.C. Conference, Dublin
27/28 March, 08	L.A.M.A. Spring Conference, Trim
28 - 30 March, 08	Roscrea Conference
2 - 6 April, 08	Kerry Environmental Conference, Kerry
3 April, 08	From Conflict to Consensus - Good Friday Agreement, Dublin
4 - 6 April 08	Training Seminar for Councillors, Ramelton
11/12 April, 08	Inclusion Ireland A.G.M., Tullamore
25/26 April, 08	Planning Seminar for Councillors, Limerick
17/18 April, 08	Water 'The Challenges for Users' Cork
19 April, 08	1916 Revolution or Betrayal
24 - 26 April, 08	Tipperary Peace Conference, Tipperary
1 May, 08	Border, Midland & Western Conference
8/9 May, 08	Role of Local Government in Community & Rural Development, Kerry
14/15 May, 08	Community Transportation the 21st Century, Tralee
16/18 May, 08	Local Government & the Environment, Clare
21 May, 08	Democracy in Africa, Dun Laoighre
21 May, 08	N.A.I.A., Galway
29 May, 08	Planning Conference, Mullingar
29 May, 08	National Hib Conference, Cork
30/31 May, 08	Protecting the Environment, Dublin
6 - 8 June, 08	Local Government Housing Service, Louth
10 June, 08	Water & Community Resources, Dublin
10/11 June, 08	E.P.A. National Confence, Galway
13/14 June, 08	Westport Conference,
18 - 20 June, 08	National Tourism Conference, Carlow

Details of Conferences 2008

DATE	DETAILS OF ALL CONFERENCES APPROVED FOR ATTENDANCE BY COUNCILLORS IN 2008
27 - 29 June, 08	Byrne/Perry Summer School, Gorey
29 June - 3 July, 08	Synge Summer School, Wicklow
11/12 July, 08	Managing Culture & Arts in Ireland, Dublin
4 - 6 July, 08	The Local Government Planning Service, Skibbereen
5 - 12 July, 08	Douglas Hyde Summer School
9 - 12 July, 08	Alternative Enterprise & Sustaining Rural Economy Galway
12 - 19 July, 08	Patrick MacGill Summer School
30 July - 1 Aug. 08	The Role of Local Government in Sport, Galway
4 - 8 Aug. 08	William Carleton Summer School, Tyrone
10 - 15 Aug. 08	Parnell Summer School
17 - 23 Aug. 08	Merriman Summer School
22 - 24 Aug. 08	Local Government and the Arts, Offaly
21 - 24 Aug. 08	Humbert Summer School, Ballina
23 - 25 Aug. 08	Local Government Sustainable Economic Development, Carlow
28 Aug. 08	Omagh Arts Seminar
10 Sept. 08	Environment Ireland Conference, Dublin
12/13 Sept. 08	LAMA Workshop, Kilkenny
18 Sept. 08	South Eastern River Basin Conference, Kilkenny
18 - 21 Sept. 08	The Society for Folk Life Studies
19 - 22 Sept. 08	Energy Efficiency Conference, Galway
25/26 Sept. 08	Citizen First Conference, Ennis
2 - 4 Oct. 08	Getting a Grip, Killarney
3 - 5 Oct. 08	Annual La touche Legacy Seminar, Wicklow
8 Oct. 08	The European Poverty Network, Dublin
9 - 12 Oct. 08	The Role of Local Government in Protecting our Water Resources
10/11 Oct. 08	F.O. I. Conference, Limerick
15/16 Oct. 08	Climate Change, Dublin
16 - 18 Oct. 08	Third Sector Forum Conference Local Authority Financing, Dublin
17 - 19 Oct. 08	PSAI Annual Conference, Galway
19/20 Oct. 08	Human Rights Education for a Sustainable Future
24/25 Oct. 08	The North South Confederation of Councillors Seminar, Galway
31 Oct - 2 Nov. 08	Anti Social Behaviour Conference, Tipperary
31 Oct - 1 Nov. 08	The Local Government Budget 2009, Wexford
6 Nov. 08	Irish National Radon Forum

Details of Conferences 2008

DATE	DETAILS OF ALL CONFERENCES APPROVED FOR ATTENDANCE BY COUNCILLORS IN 2008
10 Nov. 08	Why Equality Matters, Dublin
13 Nov. 08	Carers Health and Well Being, Dublin
14 - 16 Nov. 08	Public Relations & Communication Skills for Councillors, Donegal
21 - 23 Nov. 08	Information & Communications for Councillors
22 Nov. 08	Impact of Domestic Violence on Children
26 Nov. 08	L.A.M.A. Winter Conference
27 - 29 Nov. 08	Clare Tourism Conference
5/6 Dec. 08	Homelessness in Ireland

Finance Department

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 2008

The Income and Expenditure Account Statement brings together all the revenue related income and expenditure. It shows the surplus/(deficit) for the year.

EXPENDITURE BY DIVISION	NOTES	GROSS EXPENDITURE 2008	INCOME 2008	NET EXPENDITURE 2008	NET EXPENDITURE 2007
Housing & Building		€5,433,916	€4,545,792	€888,124	€258,668
Roads Transportation & Safety		€22,596,301	€18,673,821	€3,922,480	€6,157,301
Water Services		€9,866,891	€4,581,413	€5,285,478	€4,112,065
Development Management		€5,366,782	€1,664,585	€3,702,198	€2,623,854
Environmental Services		€6,787,821	€1,656,306	€5,131,515	€4,646,439
Recreation & Amenity		€4,002,131	€375,786	€3,626,345	€3,182,446
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare		€5,444,117	€4,950,995	€493,122	€957,714
Miscellaneous Services		€6,145,167	€3,199,879	€2,945,287	€1,346,190
		-	-	-	-
Total Expenditure/Income	16	€65,643,126	€39,648,577		
Net cost of Divisions to be funded from Rates & Local Government Fund				€25,994,549	€23,284,677
Rates				€4,700,580	€4,139,340
Local Government Fund - General Purpose Grant				€18,731,673	€17,773,150
County Charge				€3,281,063	€2,985,499
Surplus/(Deficit) for Year before Transfers	17			€718,766	€1,613,311
Transfers from/(to) Reserves	15			(€2,357,131)	(€1,584,356)
Overall Surplus/(Deficit) for Year				(€1,638,365)	€28,956
General Reserve @ 1st January 2008				(€1,469,501)	(€1,498,457)
General Reserve @ 31st December 2008				(€3,107,866)	(€1,469,501)

BALANCE SHEET AT 31st DECEMBER 2008

	NOTES	2008	2007
FIXED ASSETS	1		
Operational		€214,259,057	€210,533,700
Infrastructural		€1,392,357,995	€1,391,990,642
Community		€8,900,308	€8,890,420
Non-Operational		-	-
		€1,615,517,360	€1,611,414,762
WORK IN PROGRESS AND PRELIMINARY EXPENSES	2	€122,254,811	€95,885,305
Long Term Debtors	3	€18,799,493	€20,002,792
Current Assets			
Stocks	4	€200,367	€260,413
Trade Debtors & Prepayments	5	€15,611,722	€18,519,788
Bank Investments		€2,856,327	€2,759,873
Cash at Bank		-	€88,680
Cash on Hand		€1,498	€1,499
Urban Account	7	€991,931	€1,058,060
		€19,661,846	€22,688,313
CURRENT LIABILITIES (AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR)			
Bank Overdraft		€9,561,660	-
Creditors & Accruals	6	€13,712,745	€13,066,433
Urban Account	7	-	-
Finance Leases		€119,087	€119,087
		€23,393,492	€13,185,520
NET CURRENT ASSETS / (LIABILITIES)		(€3,731,646)	€9,502,793
Creditors (Amounts falling due after more than one year)			
Loans Payable	8	€57,118,747	€55,310,645
Finance Leases		€439,949	€476,351
Refundable deposits	9	€1,841,667	€1,847,378
Other		0	0
		€59,400,363	€57,634,374
NET ASSETS		€1,693,439,654	€1,679,171,279
FINANCED BY			
Capitalisation Account	10	€1,615,517,355	€1,611,414,762
Income WIP	2	€117,114,410	€94,511,665
Specific Revenue Reserve		€1,103,774	€1,103,774
General Revenue Reserve		(€3,107,866)	(€1,469,501)
Other Balances	11	(€37,188,019)	(€26,389,422)
TOTAL RESERVES		€1,693,439,654	€1,679,171,278

Motor Taxation

Driver and Vehicle Licences are processed in Sligo Motor Taxation Offices at Cleveragh Retail Park, Sligo and Teach Laighne, Tubbercurry.

The Offices are linked to the Driver and Vehicle Computer Services Division in Shannon, Co. Clare, who are responsible for and co-ordinate nationally vehicle ownership, licensing, and 'on line' services. The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, and the Roads Safety Authority work in Partnership with Motor Taxation Offices.

KEY STATISTICS FOR 2008 :

Postal Applications	8,793 (14.17%)
Postal Vehicle Licences issued on same day	98%
Postal Vehicle Licences issued on third day or less	1.1%
Total Vehicle Licences issued in 2008	62,149
Total Driving Licences issued in 2008	9,161
Tax Discs issued 'on line' in 2008	23.64%
Cumulative Total of business transacted in Sligo Motor Taxation Offices in 2008	€11,353,017

Service Indicators

INDICATORS		2007	2008
F.3 FIRE PREVENTION The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	A. Total number of fire safety certificate applications received.	202	128
	B. Total number of fire safety certificate applications processed (including cases deemed invalid).	317	128
CP.1 PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL YOUTH COUNCIL/ COMHAIRLE NA N-OG SCHEME The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	Percentage of local schools and youth groups involved in the local Youth Council/ Comhairle na n-Og scheme.	50	45.45
C.1 WORKING DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through certified leave.	5.61	6.13
	B. Percentage of working days lost to sickness absence through uncertified leave.	0.01	0.59
C.2 STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	Expenditure on Training and Development as a percentage of total payroll costs:	6.7	6.1
E.2 DRINKING WATER ANALYSIS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Percentage of drinking water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to public schemes.	97	96.54
	B. Percentage of drinking water analysis results in compliance with statutory requirements with regard to private schemes (where appropriate).	96.21	95.66
E4: HOUSING WASTE SENT FOR RECYCLING The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Percentage of household waste collected from kerbside, which is sent for recycling.	30	17.05
	B. Tonnage of household waste collected from kerbside, which is sent for recycling.	4752	2361.74
E5: HOUSEHOLD WASTE SENT FOR LANDFILL The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. The percentage of household waste collected which is sent to landfill.	70	82.95
	B. The tonnage of household waste collected which is sent to landfill.	11129	11487.29
GLASS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. The number of Bring Sites for recycling.	47	50
	B. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling.	2	2
	C. The total number of facilities for recycling.	49	52
	D. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population.	4.02	4.27
CANS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	E. The number of Bring Sites for recycling	47	42
	F. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling.	2	2
	G. The total number of facilities for recycling.	49	44
	H. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population.	4.02	3.61
TEXTILES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	I. The number of Bring Sites for recycling.	10	10
	J. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling.	2	2
	K. The total number of facilities for recycling.	12	12
	L. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population.		
BATTERIES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	M. The number of Bring Sites for recycling.	24	18
	N. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling.	2	2
	O. The total number of facilities for recycling.	26	20
	P. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population.	2.13	1.64

Service Indicators

INDICATORS		2007	2008
OILS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	Q. The number of Bring Sites for recycling. R. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling. S. The total number of facilities for recycling. T. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population.	0 1 1 0.08	18 2 20 1.64
OTHER MATERIALS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	U. The number of Bring Sites for recycling. V. The number of Civic Amenity Centres for recycling. W. The total number of facilities for recycling. X. The number of locations for recycling per 5,000 of population.	0 2 2 0.16	0 2 2 0.16
E7: LITTER PREVENTION AND ENFORCEMENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Number of full-time litter wardens. B. Number of part-time litter wardens. C. Number of litter wardens (both full- and part-time) per 5,000 population. D. Number of on-the-spot fines issued. F. Number of prosecution cases taken because of non-payment of onthe-spot fines. G. Number of prosecutions secured in cases taken because of nonpayment of on-the-spot fines. K. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are unpolluted (i.e. litter-free). L. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are slightly polluted with litter. M. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are moderately polluted with litter. N. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are significantly polluted with litter. O. Percentage of areas in the local authority that are grossly polluted with litter.	2 5 0.57 316 19 5 0 89 9 2 0 2	2 5 0.57 229 1 0 10.42 50.00 33.33 4.17 .08
E8: ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLAINTS AND ENFORCEMENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	A. Total number of cases subject to complaints concerning environmental pollution (relating to waste, litter, water pollution, noise pollution, air pollution). B. Number of complaints investigated. D. Number of enforcement procedures taken.	3104 3361 598	4988 4994 622
E9: PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN ENVIRONMENTAL CAMPAIGNS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Percentage of primary schools participating in environmental campaigns. B. Percentage of secondary schools participating in environmental campaigns.	91 98	80.99 100
H1: HOUSING VACANCIES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. The total number of dwellings in local authority stock. C. The overall percentage of dwellings that are empty (excluding those subject to major refurbishment projects). D. The percentage of empty dwellings unavailable for letting. E. The percentage of empty dwellings available for letting.	1938 6 78.99 21.01	1997.75 4.07 76.62 23.38
H2: AVERAGE TIME TAKEN TO RE-LET AVAILABLE DWELLINGS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	The average time taken (in weeks) from the date of vacation of dwelling to the date when all necessary repairs are carried out which are deemed necessary to re-let the dwelling.	2.23	54

Service Indicators

INDICATORS		2007	2008
H3: HOUSING REPAIRS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	Number of repairs completed as a percentage of the number of valid repair requests received.	86	89.95
H4: TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	Total number of traveller families accommodated as a percentage of the targets set in the local traveller accommodation programme.	33.3	50.0
L.1 LIBRARY PUBLIC OPENING HOURS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Average number of opening hours per week for full-time libraries. B. Average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries (where applicable).	40.83 14	42.4 22.63
L.3 LIBRARY STOCK The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	B. Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide) for books. C. Number of items issued per head of population (county/city wide) for other items.	3.21 0.08	3.54 0.18
L.4 INTERNET ACCESS THROUGH LIBRARIES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	Number of Internet sessions provided per 1,000 population.	570.5	419.03
M.1 NUMBER OF MOTOR TAX TRANSACTIONS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with over the counter. B. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with by post. C. Number of motor tax transactions which are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone). D. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with over the counter. E. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with by post. F. Percentage of motor tax transactions which are dealt with in other ways (e.g. online, by telephone).	61865 8134 13158 74.4 9.8 1 15.8	53359 8793 15628 68.60 1.30 20.09
M.2 TIME TAKEN TO PROCESS MOTOR TAX POSTAL APPLICATIONS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued). B. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the second or third day from receipt of the application. C. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application. D. Number of postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) in over five days from receipt of the application. E. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the same day as receipt of the application. F. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the second or third day from receipt of the application. G. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) on the fourth or fifth day from receipt of the application. H. Percentage of overall postal applications which are dealt with (i.e. disc issued) in over five days from receipt of the application.	7908 167 8 51 97 2 0 1	8617 101 3 72 98.00 1.15 0.03 0.82
M.3 PUBLIC OPENING HOURS	Average number of opening hours per week	32.5	32.5

Service Indicators

INDICATORS		2007	2008
P.1 - PLANNING APPLICATIONS - DECISION MAKING INDIVIDUAL HOUSES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Number of applications decided.	506	417
	B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks.	404	321
	C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information.	67	67
	D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000.	35	29
	E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought.	75	74.42
	F. Percentage of applications granted.	90	90.41
	G. Percentage of applications refused.	10	9.59
	H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala.	63	61.54
	I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala.	37	38.46
NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Number of applications decided.	58	30
	B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks.	33	15
	C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information.	21	15
	D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000.	4	0
	E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought.	76	77.87
	F. Percentage of applications granted.	79	86.67
	G. Percentage of applications refused.	21	13.33
	H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala.	75	66.67
	I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala.	25	33.33
OTHER: NOT REQUIRING ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	A. Number of applications decided.	781	513
	B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks.	609	427
	C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information.	165	83
	D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000.	7	3
	E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought.	74	75.16
	F. Percentage of applications granted.	96	92.98
	G. Percentage of applications refused.	4	7.02
	H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala.	67	91.30
	I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord Pleanala.	33	8.70

Service Indicators

INDICATORS		2007	2008
OTHER: REQUIRING ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	<p>A. Number of applications decided</p> <p>B. Number of decisions in Column A which were decided within 8 weeks.</p> <p>C. Number of decisions in Column A which required the submission of further information.</p> <p>D. Number of decisions in Column A where an extension of time was agreed to by the applicant, under section 34(9) of the Planning and development Act 2000.</p> <p>E. Average length of time taken (in days) to decide an application where further information was sought.</p> <p>F. Percentage of applications granted.</p> <p>G. Percentage of applications refused.</p> <p>H. Percentage of cases where the decision was confirmed, with or without variations, by An Bord Pleanala.</p> <p>I. Percentage of cases where the decision was reversed by An Bord</p>	<p>1</p> <p>0</p> <p>1</p> <p>0</p> <p>108</p> <p>100</p> <p>0</p> <p>0</p> <p>100</p>	<p>2</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>0</p> <p>108</p> <p>100</p> <p>0</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>
OTHER: NOT REQUIRING ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	<p>A. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were investigated.</p> <p>B. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were dismissed.</p> <p>C. Total number of cases subject to complaints that were resolved through negotiations.</p> <p>D. Number of enforcement procedures taken through warning letters.</p> <p>E. Number of enforcement procedures taken through enforcement notices.</p> <p>F. Number of prosecutions.</p>	<p>220</p> <p>30</p> <p>134</p> <p>217</p> <p>129</p> <p>56</p>	<p>256</p> <p>77</p> <p>193</p> <p>219</p> <p>126</p> <p>35</p>
P.3 PLANNING PUBLIC OPENING HOURS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	Average number of opening hours per week.	37.5	37.5
P.4 PRE-PLANNING CONSULTATION The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	<p>A. Number of pre-planning consultation meetings held</p> <p>B. Average length of time (in days) from request for consultation with local authority to actual formal meeting for pre-planning consultation.</p>	<p>1523</p> <p>10.07</p>	<p>1262</p> <p>10.42</p>
P.5 NEW BUILDINGS INSPECTED The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	Buildings inspected as a percentage of new buildings notified to the local authority.	23	33.51
REC.1 CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	<p>A. Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population directly provided by the local authority.</p> <p>B. Number of children's playgrounds per 1,000 population facilitated by the local authority.</p>	<p>0.07</p> <p>0.12</p>	<p>0.10</p> <p>0.13</p>
REV.1 HOUSE RENT The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report:	<p>A. Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due from House Rent.</p> <p>B. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are 4-6 weeks old.</p> <p>C. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are 6-12 weeks old.</p> <p>D. Percentage of arrears on House Rent that are more than 12 weeks old.</p>	<p>92</p> <p>8.1</p> <p>9.775</p> <p>71.88</p>	<p>91.06</p> <p>19.13</p> <p>12.47</p> <p>68.41</p>

Service Indicators

INDICATORS		2007	2008
REV.3 COMMERCIAL RATES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	Amount collected at year-end as a percentage of amount due from Commercial rates.	91	84.73
REV.4 REFUSE CHARGES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	Percentage of households paying refuse charges (including waivers) at year end.		
REV.5 NON-DOMESTIC WATER CHARGES The following indicator is presented in the service indicators report and in order to compile this information, local authorities should submit the following data:	Amount collected at year end as a percentage of amount due for Non-Domestic Water Charges.	40	48.33